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LD221415 [Editorial Report]

Iran-Iraq Conflict

An Iraqi military spokesman cited by Voice of the Masses radio announced that another "Al-Husayn" missile was fired at Tehran 21 March. Iraqi warplanes also dealt a "devastating" blow to Dezful, according to a communique carried by the radio. IRNA reported that at least 9 civilians were killed and 24 wounded in the attacks on Tehran and Dezful. More casualties were inflicted 22 March when Iraqi aircraft dropped chemical bombs on Iranian villages in the Marivan area, IRNA stated. The agency added that over 10,000 Iraqi Kurds have been killed or wounded in recent Iraqi chemical attacks in the Halabjah area. As for the effects of Iranian bombardments, the Iraqi communique reported that Iranian shelling of Basra and Qal'at Dizah the night of 20 March killed three civilians and injured six.

In the Gulf, Iranian gunboats attacked a Norwegian natural gas tanker west of Dubayy 22 March, killing at least 2 crewmen and wounding 10 others, according to shipping sources cited by Radio Monte Carlo. Iranian gunboats also attacked a Greek tanker off the UAE coast the same day, causing a fire but no casualties, Athens radio disclosed.

A Spanish merchant ship was hit by rockets fired from a gunboat in the Gulf the previous day, Madrid radio reported, adding that the Spanish Foreign Ministry protested to Iran over the attack. The rockets caused considerable damage but inflicted no casualties, the radio said. An earlier Iranian attack on a Liberian tanker chartered by a Japanese company sparked off a fire in the vessel's engine room but caused no casualties, according to KYODO. The agency noted that news of this incident came amid reports that some 50 seamen were killed during the 19 March Iraqi air raid on two Iranian supertankers at Khark Island. The supertankers "Awaj" and "Sanandaj" sustained heavy damage in the raid and were still ablaze 21 March, according to a Lloyds report cited by INA.

Syria, Israel, and the Saudi Missiles

Israeli statements "threatening to strike" at Saudi Arabia's medium-range surface-to-surface missiles have exposed Israel's "propensity for aggression and its aim of imposing domination and hegemony" over the region, a Syrian official source asserted in a statement carried by Damascus radio. In response to this, Syria declares that any aggression against Saudi Arabia will be considered an aggression against Syria "with the consequent shouldering of the full pan-Arab responsibilities for confronting the aggression."

Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Israeli prime minister's office, viewed this Syrian statement as "not much more than mere posturing," according to Jerusalem radio, and he said Syria knows that escalation of any type would be bad for Syria as well as for Israel. Regarding the Saudi missiles, he said Israel will "not sit by" if it is faced with any kind of threat to its security and existence.

Israel: Occupied Territories

One Arab youth was killed by IDF fire during a riot in the Gaza Strip and six other youths were likewise wounded by IDF fire in "Judaea and Samaria," Jerusalem radio reported. A woman from a Jewish settlement was also wounded when a stone was thrown at her car in Qalqilyah, the radio noted. Police in the Gaza Strip are investigating the death of an Arab who was found dead after disappearing from his house recently, the radio said. Another investigation is under way into the murder of an Arab resident of Khan Yunus who was shot dead 22 March by unknown persons, "probably Arabs," IDF radio revealed.

In another development, Jerusalem television reported that the "unified national command of the uprising" has distributed "pamphlet No. 11" which sets dates for further action against the Israeli authorities. Noting that it contains no threats against Jordan's supporters, the television said the latest pamphlet reflects the ongoing controversy over tactics between Fatah and its leftist critics.

A recent gun attack on the house of a pro-Fatah magazine editor was also linked with this dispute, the television maintained, adding that the incident is evidence of the beginnings of a "fight for control" over the uprising. On Israeli measures against the uprising, the leftist paper 'AL HAMISHMAR reported that the authorities are contemplating further "drastic measures," including closure of the Jordan River bridges.

ICO Conference

In a speech carried by Amman radio, Jordanian King Husayn welcomed the participants in the 17th ICO foreign ministers conference, and he called on them to unite their efforts toward solving the various problems which confront the Arab nation. Following a closed-door session, the conferees endorsed a draft agenda which includes the Palestinian uprising, the Gulf war, the Iranian demonstrations in Mecca, the Libya-Chad dispute, and the Afghan problem, Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri announced in remarks cited by Amman radio 22 March. Al-Masri also observed that it is "doubtful" that any real breakthrough on resolving the Iran-Iraq conflict could be made at the level of the ICO; however, he noted that an Iranian delegation is in attendance in Amman, the JORDAN TIMES reported.

Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, who declined to travel to the capital of a country which supports Iraq, sent a message calling on the ICO to denounce Baghdad's "extensive chemical bombing" of Kurdish villages in northeastern Iraq, Tehran radio reported. The message also warned that "the continuation of these war crimes will have a dangerous impact in the region."

For Afghanistan's part, the Kabul government charged that any discussion of the Afghan issue would be "open negation" of the ICO and UN Charters as well as "interference" in Afghanistan's internal affairs, according to a Foreign Ministry "announcement" broadcast by Kabul radio. After protesting the exclusion of the Republic of Afghanistan, the Foreign Ministry declared that Kabul will therefore not be "bound" by any resolutions the ICO adopts.

Lebanon

Beirut Explosion—One man was killed and 13 others wounded by an explosion in the Al-Maqasid area of West Beirut, Voice of Lebanon radio reported.

Attacks on SLA—The SLA delivered a "hard blow" to gunmen who attacked various SLA positions in the south, the Voice of Hope radio reported, adding that the SLA soldiers repulsed the attackers in all areas. Beirut radio said the attacks were carried out by members of the Amal Movement.

PSP Presidential Candidate—PSP leader Walid Junblatt announced 20 March that his party's candidate for the presidential election will be Antoine al-Ashqar, a "well-known struggler" in the PSP, the clandestine Voice of the Mountain radio reported.

Egypt

Police in Al-Matariyah arrested 24 people after a crowd went on the rampage, smashing windows and burning public vehicles, MENA reported. The rioters included mourners at the funeral of a man who died as a result of a police chase.

Maghreb Affairs

Agreements on the establishment of Libyan-Algerian joint companies in the fields of natural gas transport, electrical energy, and petrochemicals were signed in Algiers by officials of the two countries, JANA reported.

Afghanistan

The Foreign Ministry "strongly" protested an incident 17 March when a Pakistani F-16 strafed three Afghan helicopters over the Barg-e Matal area, Kabul radio reported.

Islamic Affairs

Islamic Conference Members Meet in Amman

Ministers' Arrivals Reported

JN181246 Amman Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Delegations of Arab and Islamic countries which will participate in the Islamic foreign ministers' conference due to begin in Amman on Monday [21 March] began arriving in Amman today. These were the delegations of Oman, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Mali, Niger, Indonesia, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso.

Libya's Al-Talhi

JN192134 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Amman—Jadallah 'Azzuz al-Talhi, secretary of the People's Committee of the Libyan People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison, arrived in Amman today to participate in the ICO foreign ministers' meetings. Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri received him at the airport. [passage omitted]

Egypt's 'Abd al-Majid

JN201644 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] The Islamic states' foreign ministers continued to arrive in Amman to participate in the ICO foreign ministers' 17th conference. Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, arrived in Amman today. He was received at the airport by Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masir, a number of the Foreign Ministry officials, and the Egyptian ambassador in Amman. The delegation accompanying Dr 'Abd al-Majid includes Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs, and a number of Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials.

Comoran Foreign Minister Said Kafe also arrived in Amman today. He was received at the airport by Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri and a number of Foreign Ministry officials.

The Afghan mujahidin delegation led by Muhammad Jaji Muhammad also arrived in Amman today to participate in the conference as an observer. The delegation was received by the chief of protocol at the Foreign Ministry and a number of senior officials.

Moroccan, African Ministers

JN201904 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Islamic nations' foreign ministers or their representatives continue to arrive in Amman for the ICO foreign ministers conference. [passage omitted]

Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali arrived in Amman this evening. Others to arrive were Mohamed Lemine Ould N'Diayane, Mauritanian foreign affairs and cooperation minister; Dr Mahbubul Haq, Pakistan's minister of commerce, planning and development; Mahmad Sani Baki, Niger's foreign minister; Ibrahima Fall, Senegal's foreign minister; Gouara Lassou, Chad's foreign minister; Martino Lima, Guinea-Bissau's minister of state for foreign affairs [as heard]; and Martin Bongo, Gabon's minister of state for foreign affairs. On hand to greet them at the airport were Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri and the chief of the Political Department at the Foreign Ministry.

Another arrival in Amman today was Turkey's Foreign Minister Misut Yilmaz accompanied by the under secretary of the Foreign Ministry. They were greeted at the airport by Tahir al-Masir, the Turkish ambassador in Amman, and a number of Foreign Ministry officials.

Saudi, PDRY, YAR Ministers

JN211039 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Amman—His Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, arrived in Amman this morning to participate in the meetings of the 17th Islamic foreign ministers conference which will begin in Amman this evening. His highness praised Jordan's great efforts under His Majesty King Husayn to achieve Arab and Islamic solidarity.

In a press statement, he said the convocation of the Islamic foreign ministers' conference in Jordan, which has the longest line of confrontation with the Israeli enemy, surely indicates the sincerity of this country's trend toward building Arab and Islamic soldiarity. He hoped that the conference, which will discuss the most important issues of the Arab and Islamic nations, headed by the Palestine question and the Iraq-Iran war, will come up with recommendations which will have a positive effect on these issues.

YAR Foreign Minister Dr Muhammad Sa'id al-'Attar and PDRY Foreign Minister 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Dali also arrived in Amman this morning to participate in the conference. Also arriving in Amman for the same purpose were Bangladesh Foreign Minister Humayun Rashid Chowdhury and Maldivian Foreign Minister Fathulla Jameel. They were received by Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, senior Foreign Ministry officials, and a number of these countries' ambassadors to Jordan.

Syria's Al-Shar'

JN211553 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1515 GMT 21 Mar 88

[text] This afternoon Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Amman to lead the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic to the 17th ICO meeting of foreign ministers due to open in Amman this evening.

Pirzada Discusses Agenda

JN171546 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Amman, 17 Mar (PETRA)—ICO Secretary General Sharifuddin Pirzada has said that the 17th conference of Islamic foreign ministers, which will begin its meetings in Amman on Monday [21 March], will be convened with the Islamic nation facing delicate circumstances. This nation is in dire need of settling its differences, unifying its stands, and restoring its solidarity, so that it can collectively confront the challenges facing it. Pirzada added that one of the most prominent challenges facing the Islamic nation is the fierce Zionist onslaught against the Palestinian people, as well as the conspiracies being hatched by Israel and its allies against this people and their sole legitimate representative, the PLO.

He pointed out that the Amman conference will discuss ways to guarantee the realization of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights and support their blessed uprising, which has entered its 4th month. He added that the conferees will also discuss methods of exerting pressure to bring about the convening of an international Mideast peace conference, with the participation of all concerned parties, including the PLO, which must participate in this conference on an equal footing with other parties.

This information was revealed in a press statement made by Pirzada upon his arrival in Amman today. Pirzada arrived in Amman at the head of a delegation of the ICO General Secretariat to prepare for and participate in the 17th conference of Islamic foreign ministers. [passage omitted]

Pirzada indicated that the issues of Palestine, the Middle East, and holy Jerusalem will figure highly on the 78 items of the conference agenda, including the Iraq-Iran war. This war has recently witnessed a dangerous escalation, which dictates that the Islamic nation must expedite efforts to find a just and honorable solution to end it. He added that the conference will also discuss the situation in Afghanistan and the negotiations currently under way, under UN auspices, to reach a political solution. This solution should restore the Islamic nature and nonaligned status of Afghanistan, ensure the return of millions of refugees to their homeland in honor and dignity, and grant the Muslim Afghan people the right to choose the regime of their liking.

The conferees will also discuss South Africa's apartheid policies, and ways to support the independence of Namibia, as well as ways to back the South African people's efforts to regain their rights and end the hateful racial discrimination. Pirzada went on to say that other important issues on the conference agenda include all forms of international terrorism, Muslims in the southern Philippines, and the status of Muslims in a number of states that are not affiliated with the ICO. He said that the conference will also discuss a number of conflicts plaguing the Islamic nation. The conferees, he added, will also discuss the ties of cooperation between the ICO and regional and international organizations. [passage omitted]

'Differences' Emerge

JN200739 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] The preparatory meetings of the 17th ICO ministerial conference concluded in Amman yesterday. Eighty-seven topics previously listed on the agenda were endorsed, but they were combined under large headings at the request of Jordan to facilitate the work of the conference.

Differences emerged among some member states when the agenda was discussed. Libya and Syria, the USSR's allies, called for omitting the Afghan issue from the agenda. However, the request, according to an Arab source, was rejected.

Syria suggested that aid to the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories be expanded to include resistance against Israel in the Golan and southern Lebanon, but the Palestinian delegation opposed this proposal.

Iran objected to discussing the subject of the pilgrimage and preventing the recurrence of riots, but in vain.

Iraq proposed discussing the subject of Jewish emigration from Iran to Israel. It distributed a leaflet to the participating delegations stating that Iran is facilitating the emigration of Jews in return for weapons and military spare parts.

The agenda topics will be announced today. It can be emphasized in advance that three topics head the agenda. These are: the Gulf war, the uprising in the occupied territories, and the Afghan issue. It was learned from the Palestinian delegation that it was agreed to call this conference the conference of Islamic solidarity with the uprising in the occupied territories. The opening session will begin tomorrow with a speech by Jordanian King Husayn. The conference meetings will last 4 days after which a final statement will be issued.

Pirzada Addresses Session

JN212109 Amman Television Service in English 2000 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The secretary general of the OIC, Mr Sharifuddin Pirzada, addressing the session, thanked his majesty the king and the Jordanian Government and people for hosting the conference. Mr Pirzada paid tribute to his majesty's inspiring inaugural aggress, which he said, wisely and frankly discussed the major challenges confronting the Islamic world and pointed the way the Islamic world should follow to tackle and overcome them. The months that have elapsed since the holding of the 5th Islamic summit conference in Kuwait in January, 1987, Mr Pirzada said, have been eventful. 1988 has dawned on the valiant national uprising of the Palestinian people rejecting occupation and asserting their right to self-determination and independence in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr Pirzada noted that the Israeli brutal response to this spontaneous and massive uprising has revolted world conscience. Mr Pirzada went on to say that Israel is not a peace-loving country nor does it desire peace. Israel also rejects all peace overtures and efforts to negotiate a return to peace. For years, Mr Pirzada noted, the international community has demanded the holding of an international peace conference on the Middle East, and for years Israel has rejected the proposal. The secretary general of the OIC remarked that while the hope for a settlement of the Palestinian issue remains illusive, there has been some positive development in the conflict in Afghanistan, namely; the decision to withdraw Soviet troops.

Mr Pirzada noted that the Iraq-Iran war continues to cause the gravest concern to the entire Islamic nation. Despite the best efforts of the OIC as well as the international community, no end to this war seems to be in sight, stated Mr Pirzada. Mr Pirzada urged the Islamic foreign minsiters to examine fresh approaches to bring the Iraq-Iran war, which is causing attrition to the energy and strength of the entire Islamic world, to a just and peaceful end. The secretary general of the OIC also pointed out that the African Continent is witnessing grave economic difficiulties, and called for the conference to pay special attention to this problem.

Husayn Meets Delegates

JN212005 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1815 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] This afternoon at the Royal Hashemite Court, His Majesty King Husayn received the Arab countries' foreign minsiters, who are participating in the Islamic states' conference that began in Amman this evening. His Majesty King Husayn welcomed the ministers and wished them every success in their work. He also expressed his pleasure over the convening of the Islamic states' conference in Amman, which hosted the summit of reconciliation and accord. His majesty reviewed Jordan's efforts both in the Arab and international arenas as well as his visits to the European countries and the Vatican in order to explain the resolutions taken by the Arab leaders during the Amman summit—the summit of reconciliation and accord—which dealt with the Arab causes, foremost of which are the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

His majesty, then, referred to the positive statement issued by the EC foreign ministers after the speech his majesty delivered at the meeting of the EC foreign ministers in Bonn last month. During his conversation with the Arab countries' foreign ministers, his majesty also refered to the recent U.S. move represented by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz' tour of the region's countries and his proposals to the leaders of these countries. He also said that Jordan stressed to the U.S. secretary of state that a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East will be achieved only through the convening of an international peace conference to be attended by the five permanent Security Council memebr states and all the parties in the dispute, including the PLO. He also affirmed that Jordan rejects unilateral and partial solutions, and that any solution to the Middle East crisis should be just and comprehensive.

He added that his recent visit to a number of the fraternal Arab countries was aimed at making an overall assessment of the situation in both the Arab and international arenas and at taking a unified Arab position on it. He also pointed to the uprising of the kinfolk in the occupied Arab territories, and said that the uprising is a popular revolution against occupation and repression. He also stressed the need to support the uprising until it achieves its goals in ending the Israeli occupation and securing the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people on their soil. The meeting was attended by Crown Prince Hasan, Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, Royal Hashemite Court Chief Marwan al-Qasim, Court Minister 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah, and Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri.

Syria Submits Resolutions

JN220657 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Amman—The Syrian delegation to the ICO foreign ministers conference in Amman, led by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', has submitted eight draft resolutions. The political committee of the conference will begin discussing them, along with other topics, today. The Syrian draft resolutions include the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict which also includes the issue of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights and the serious situation of the Arab people there and the occupied Arab territories, the strategic alliance between Israel and the United States, the contestation of Israel's credentials to the United Nations, Israeli nuclear arms, the restoration or establishment of diplomatic relations between the Zionist enemy and some states, the issue of

international terrorism and all its forms, and the holding of an international conference under UN auspices to define terrorism and to distinguish between it and peoples' struggles for national liberation.

Al-Masri News Conference

JN220817 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22 Mar 88 pp 1, 5

[By Salamah B. Ni'mat]

[Text] Amman—Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, chairman of 17th session of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) foreign ministers conference, said Monday he expected Iran to oppose a draft resolution on the Gulf war and ruled out any renewed mediation efforts between Iraq and Iran in the context of the conference in Amman. "I do not think there will be many differences on the Iran-Iraq war," Al-Masri told a press conference following the first working session of the foreign ministers meeting Monday. "It is expected that Iran will oppose the draft resolution to be presented later to the conference."

Al-Masri said there was no direct link between a recent visit to Moscow by Prime Minister Zayd Al-Rifa'i and a visit by His Majesty King Husayn to Pakistan scheduled to begin today with mediation efforts related to the Afghan problem. Al-Masri said that the king's Pakistan visit was scheduled a long time ago and that it was designed to coincide with Pakistan's National Day. However, he said: "We cannot deny that the question of Afghanistan will be high in the talks." The foreign minister did not comment on Al-Rifa'i's visit to Moscow. He told journalists that the Afghan issue would be one of the most important items on the conference's agenda, along with the Palestinian uprising and the Gulf war. He said that a document on the Palestinian uprising had been drafted and that it would be released today.

Al-Masri welcomed the Iranian delegation to the conference saying "we welcome the brothers from Iran. They are members (of the OIC) and the Foreign Ministry has extended a formal invitation to (Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar) Velayati to attend." Al-Masri told the news conference he did not expect any efforts during the conference towards discussing an end of the "war of the cities" between Iran and Iraq. "To be realistic," Al-Masri said, "we have to acknowledge that continued Arab, Islamic and international mediation efforts with Iran have failed and the war is spreading and increasing in intensity. To achieve reconciliation during this conference and at this level is doubtful."

Responding to Iranian allegations that the OIC was dominated by rich Muslim countries, Al-Masri said: "We hear the Iranians talk and we know what they mean. They are accusing others. It is true rich Muslim countries have influence, but they do not dominate." The foreign minister said that the question of last year's Iranian riots in the holy city of Mecca would be on the agenda of talks which open today. Al-Masri said Jordan presented the item on the Mecca riots because of responsibilities entrusted to the Kingdom by the Nov.'87 Arab summit conference. He said that the Jordanian presentation did not tackle arrangements for this year's pilgrimage.

On requests by the Filipino Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Afghan mujahidin for full membership in the OIC, Al-Masri said that neither group had made a formal request for membership but that they were not likely to be accepted as members. "They have to be a state to become members," he explained. He said that these and other issues would be discussed by concerned committees. Press reports said that Philippine President Corazon Aquino sent a message to King Husayn Monday urging Islamic states to withhold support for Muslim rebels in her country. A source familiar with the message told REUTERS that Aquino had asked the King to use his influence to ensure that the OIC would continue to treat Muslim claims in the southern Philippines as a domestic affair of the Philippines.

Al-Masri said Jordan had sponsored the return of an item related to he Libya-Chad conflict back on the agenda. He said the OIC agreed to the reintroduction of the item along the lines it was presented during the last Islamic summit in Kuwait.

Iranian, Afghan Delegates Cited

JN220855 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22 Mar 88 p 1

[By Nurmeen Murad]

[Text] Amman—Rival groups and countries are competing for recognition and support at the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) foreign ministers meeting which opened here Monday. The political issues involved range from the Islamic world's core in the Middle East to the Philippines in the Far East. The Palestinian uprising has taken its rightful place at the top of the list of these issues. Following close behind are the nearly eight-year-old Iran-Iraq war, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, problems facing the Muslim minority in Bulgaria, the Cypriot conflict, and the Muslim rebel movement in the Philippines.

The unexpected attendance of Iran at the meeting, after boycotting the last Islamic summit, held in Kuwait last year, indicates Iran's hope to regain confidence of the Islamic countries, according to analysts. With most countries supporting Iraq and after the Iranian-Saudi clashes in Mecca in July 1987, Iran appears to be anxious to highlight its Islamic image, the analysts said. Sheikh Mohammad 'Ali Taskhiri, head of the Iranian delegation, said Iran believes that "there is an Islamic awakening gripping the Islamic community today." Taskhiri, director of foreign relations in the Iranian Ministry of Religious Guidance, said, "Iran is participating (in the

Amman conference) to help achieve Islamic unity." He hoped that the conference would achieve its goal in supporting the Palestinian cause. But "I doubt it," he said.

Taskhiri maintained that Iran had not rejected U.S. Security Council Resolution 598. He explained that "598 came close to reaching the reality of the war but not quite." He reiterated Iran's demands for ending the war. "Three demands have to be fulfilled: defining the aggressor in this war, war reparations, and return of Iraqi refugees living in Iran to their country," he said. Taskhiri stressed Iran's support for the Afghan mujahidin's cause and "any other viable cause in the Islamic community."

The mujahidin are participating in the conference as observers but are carrying high hopes for upgrading their status at the OIC to full membership. Mir Hamza, member of the Higher Union of Islamic Confederation of Afghanistan, said that the delegation would ask the OIC foreign ministers to press the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops and allow the "people of Afghanistan choose their own destiny." He said the mujahidin do not accept the U.N.-sponsored Geneva talks over the Afghan issue because "it does not include the main parties to the dialogue." He added that their acceptance of any outcome of the Geneva talks would come only after the Soviet Union accepts the transitional government appointed by the mujahidin.

The transitional government includes "all different Muslim factions in Afghanistan and of the refugees," said Hamza. He said the mujahidin do not trust the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops because the Soviet Union "is making this move only to lessen the international as well as domestic pressure.

Turkey is also carrying its grievances to the OIC foreign ministers over Turkish Muslims in Bulgaria and the status of the Cypriot-Turks in the OIC. According to a member in the Turkish delegation, "Bulgaria has been practicing a policy of oppression on the Muslim minority there, depriving them of religious and cultural rights." Bulgaria has forced the one and half million Muslims in Bulgaria to change their names to Christian names, he said. He said that an OIC contact group which has been studying the situation of Muslims in Bulgaria would present a "constructive and objective" report to the foreign ministers. Turkey will also be urging the foreign ministers to "insert a paragraph to express solidarity for Cypriot Turks."

Husayn Speaks at Conference

JN211738 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1537 GMT 21 Mar 8

[Speech by Jordanian King Husayn at the opening session of the 17th Islamic foreign ministers conference in Amman—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Praise be to him, Lord of the worlds, and peace and blessings be upon the last prophets and apostles, and the Arab prophet Muhammad, the most trustworthy. Your excellencies, foreign ministers of the Islamic states, distinguished guests:

I extend my best greetings to you and welcome you to Amman, which is graced with your presence. We are happy to host you and optimistic about the convocation of our 17th conference here. Amman is the closest neighbor to holy Jerusalem. It overlooks the land from where Muhammad, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, ascended to heaven; the land of the nativity of the messiah, may God's peace be upon him, and the site of the jihad; the land whose surroundings have been blessed by God.

The cities, villages, streets, and camps of this land are witnessing waves of sacrifices offered by the Palestinian Arab people in resistance of the injustice and darkness, and in fulfillment of the objective of liberating the land and holy places and delivering the captive mosque. This land's breeze is full of the scent of the pure blood of martyrs. This land's plains and mountains are proud of old men's determination and young people's courage. Its valleys are resounding with the children's call for jihad and with the jubliations of the martyrs' mothers. And I welcome you to Jordan, the bridge of light between the two mosques in the peninsula and the holy mosque of Al-Aqsa in Palestine; Jordan, the path that 'Umar took to holy Jerusalem and that the forces of Islam took to spread the message of faith and tolerance among mankind; Jordan, the burial site of Abu 'Ubaydah, Shurahbil, Dirar, Zayd, 'Abdallah ibn Rawahah, and Ja'far al-Tayyar.

I welcome you to Jordan, the homeland of Arabs and Muslims alike. Every throb of pain and every flutter of hope felt by the Palestinian Arab people echoes here. These people are proudly and patiently clinging to the land of their fathers and forefathers. They are extending their deep roots along those of the olive trees and resolutely and heroically fighting for their freedom and national rights. Through their uprising, they are defying the arrogance and repressive measures of the forces of occupation with the indomitable spirit of Khalid and Salah al-Din, deriving power and determination from their unshakable belief in the almighty.

Dear brothers, ladies and gentlemen: You are meeting in Amman today under ICO auspices in order to discuss the items on your lengthy agenda, fully armed with a deep sense of responsibility toward Muslims and their various affairs. You have indeed convened in order to discuss these items. You have actually been authorized by your leaders, governments, and peoples to discuss your nation's problems. By God, these problems are so numerous and varied that they are almost coextensive with those of the Third World. These problems include, for example, the questions of national security, regional stability, and the usurpation of legitimate rights. They

also include those of scientific, technological, and cultural challenges and those of the requirements of comprehensvie development in all fields. Above all, they include the problems of internal disputes which have exhausted the nation's immunity and encouraged all covetous ones to extend their aggression to the very heart of the nation's existence.

A nation with these problems must unite its forces, coordinate its efforts, settle its internal differences, train its manpower, and utilize all its resources. It must do so guided by a belief in God, the ability to integrate its capabilities, and the belief in a common destiny. One part of your task, gentlemen, is to try to guide our nation out of the paths of divisiveness and alienation that are leading us astray, and to put us back on the right track of history, so as not to whither away in one of its corners. Our efforts must be united so that we may contribute to the active universal advancement in the fields of economics, science, and technology.

Our cultural heritage must be developed and maintained at the same time so that in retaining our identity we may act, not only as recipients of, but also contributors to, modern culture. If we have received a blow, the disbelieving people have received a blow the likes of it before. These are only vicissitudes which we cause to follow one another for mankind, to the end that Allah may know those who believe and may choose witnesses from among you and Allah loveth not wrong-doers [Koranic verses].

But taking note of these facts, responding emotionally to them, and mere preaching about them remain inconclusive if we want to move ahead along the path of progress and strength. In addition to the will to change, we must have the administrative, organizational, and financial mechanisms which can work through the proper institutions qualified to shoulder the task. We all know that the ICO came about in reaction to the climatic point of sinister Zionist aggression against the Islamic nation when 19 years ago the Zionists tried to burn the site from where the messenger of God ascended to heaven. Efforts since then have been exerted to take the ICO beyond the initial stage, that is, the stage of reaction, to the stage of concerted action. Toward this end, specialized committees were set up, numerous decisions were made, and many legitimate hopes and expectations were raised.

In the world of today, the world of communciations and telecommunications, the world of the flow and spread of information and of the incessant search for progress, the world of ever-intertwining interests and ever-increasing interdependence, we cannot afford in our positions of responsibility to overlook the globalization of conflicts, ambitions, and challenges in a manner similar to the sciences, the arts, and technological discoveries. The problem of earning hard currency for some countries is tied to their positions regarding the conflicts and wars of others. A developing country's desire to import technology is sometimes conditional on the exporting country's economic policies. The solutions of local conflicts are often connected with considerations of regional balance, and the settlement of one regional problem is sometimes inseparable from the settlement of another—reflecting the globalization of development and change and the globalization of approach in connection with numerous problems, some of which are high on your agenda.

If dialogue and cooperation have been necessary in all ages, societies, and countries, the phenomenon of globalization has characterized this age more than any other, and forced its weight in dealing with all kinds of problems. This in turn has increased the importance of regional and international organizations. The ICO, under whose auspices you are meeting today, must, in our view, be a forum for serious dialogue among Islamic member states on the one hand, and a vehicle for effective dialogue with other international groups and organizations on the other so that it may occupy the position it deserves in the world to benefit Islam and Muslims. Perhaps one of the basic prerequisites for the ICO to attain this effective position, besides our firm belief in God, is the unshakable confidence in our Islamic culture and its ability to assimilate development and changes that are brought about by the march of history as well as the belief in the common destiny of our people and in their common objectives, not to mention the certain desire of these people to see themselves as part of a cohesive and powerful nation that seeks progress and prosperity.

Your responsibility consists of trying to nurture this attitude. It is only natural that efforts should be concentrated to put an end to the internal Islamic discord. The objective you must attain is to settle problems and not only work for justifying policies. You also must close the doors in the face of the covetous and not keep them wide open before them. If national security and regional stability are to be safeguarded, and if our legitimate rights are to be regained, it will be necessary to hold on fast to our principles, while leaving room for maneuvering. To solve problems and to face up to challenges also necessitates a clarity of vision to define the problem and to analyze the event properly so that we may attain our individual and collective objectives in harmony and understanding, and without wasting energy or hampering efforts.

Dear brothers, the world today is experiencing a period of relief and expectation. The world is experiencing relief because the two superpowers have concluded the INF agreement. It is also experiencing a state of expectation of greater cooperation between them to help solve the numerous other regional and humanitarian problems on the basis of the spirit of detente, whose effects we have started to sense in the international arena. If the INF agreement gives us hope that the world is on the verge of crossing the threshold of the arms race, world peace and security cannot last long and cannot be entrenched without settling the regional conflicts and ending the aggressive or racist policies based on anomalous and obsolete beliefs.

The policy of colonialism which Israel is practicing in the epoch of liquidating colonialism is a phenomenon which is no less perverse than the policy of racial discrimination being pursued by the Government of South Africa in the age of the defense of human rights. Both are phenomena that go against the course of history. Therefore, they are bound to fail. This being their nature, they are both characterized by obstinacy and only bring tension, suffering, bitterness, and evil.

What puzzles and grieves us most is that some quarters or states still support these two policies or placate them overtly or covertly. Hence, there should be a firm collective and regional confrontation of these perverse phenomena and hostile policies. The policy of colonialism being practiced by Israel in the occupied Arab territories, only 40 km away from this place where you are meeting, is felt by us here in Jordan. We are experiencing its direct hostile effects every day and even every hour. The clearest proof of its ugliness is the size and nature of the rejection and struggle it has provoked. The Palestinian Arab people's uprising, which is now in its 4th month, with all the memorable sacrifices these people are offering and with all the repression, savagery, and oppression they are facing, is proof.

As for the policy of apartheid pursued by the Government of South Africa, which continues to occupy Namibia and to repeatedly attack the African Frontline States, we as Arabs and Muslims condemn it and oppose it with all the available means. We also support and stand by the United Nations and other international efforts being exerted to put an end to this abnormal situation which is marked by hostility and inhumanity. The Palestinian people's uprising, brethren, is not an end in itself nor is it a transient event that will soon wither away. It is rather an expression of the will of an entire nation to struggle for its freedom and right to self-determination on its own land. The Palestinian people have a rightful claim on us to support them and help them attain their objective on the regional and collective levels so that the uprising may bear fruit. I do not think it is necessary to mention in detail what Jordan has extended and is extending on the regional level to support the Palestinian people's steadfastness on their land since their fall under the Israeli occupation in June 1967. Our efforts are known.

On the collective level, Jordan is committed to the Arab summit resolutions which call for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict without partial or separate solutions. The latest was the Amman summit resolution in November last year. At that time, Arab leaders unanimously agreed that an international conference for peace in the Middle East be convened under the auspices of the United Nations and that it should be called by the secretary general; the five permanent member states of the Security Council should participate together with all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and on an equal footing.

This is the appropriate means of reaching a just and comprehensive peaceful settlement which can guarantee the restoration of the occupied Arab territories, the solution of the Palestine question in its entirety, and the realization of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. We believe that the diplomatic and political Islamic effort should be directed in this regard toward the crystallization of a firm international stand toward convening the above-mentioned international conference.

Ladies and gentlemen: The Iraq-Iran war, as you all know, is a deep wound in the body of the Islamic nation. It is a wound which still bleeds our resources and potentials. Our hope is that the Islamic Republic of Iran will respond to the judgment of God and the call of conscience and the requirements of its people's interests and those of its Islamic nation and agree to implement Security Council Resolution 598, which represents the will of the international community, in the order of its clauses. We hope Iran will do this to spare the blood of the two Muslim peoples in Iran and Iraq, put an end to the exhaustion of the energies of the whole Islamic nation, restore security and stability to the Gulf region, point the Muslims' efforts and capabilities in the proper direction, and stop the decline in the status of Muslims in this world.

From this premise, the Amman Arab summit of last November adopted a resolution on this war that is based on the fundamental principle of ending it to pave the way for reconciliation, good-neighborly relations, and noninterference in domestic affairs. It was also intended to restore stability to the Gulf region and mobilize the Islamic countries' energies to serve Islam and Muslims all over the world. Within the framework of talk about the internal Islamic bleeding, we hope that our brothers in Afghanistan will act to achieve a national reconciliation and not hesitate to embark on this step, especially since the Soviet Union has declared its readiness and its plan to withdraw from Afghanistan. We hope that our brothers will not let this opportunity slip away to restore stability to their country, to develop it, and resume their role in this world as an independent and nonaligned country and as an active ICO member.

Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen: The critical issues that the Islamic world is experiencing must not distract us from the other concerns dealing with development and progress which are the foundations of power and prosperity for all the peoples. Your conference will undoubtedly discuss several issues related to this vital aspect of our life. Among the top priorities perhaps, is the able Islamic countries' taking the initiative to provide financial, technical, and other assistance to the African Islamic countries which suffer from drought or from difficult economic conditions. Aslo, we must not forget the importance of upgrading the efficiency of the specialized committees stemming from the ICO, given that they are among the most important means for developing the organization into a body that can plan and act instead of remaining one that can only react.

In conclusion, let me welcome you to Amman once again, asking God to grant us success in achieving what satisfies him. He is the best helper and protector. And say: Work righteously: Soon God will observe your work, and his apostle, and the believers. [Koranic verse] May God's peace and blessings be upon you. [applause]

Egypt

Zaki Badr on Emergency Law, Detainees

NC191540 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1412 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—Interior Minister Zaki Badr has asserted that current events in the country and existing security circumstances are the factors which determine whether or not the emergency law should remain in force. He added that the emergency law is applied only to those who sabotage Egypt's economy or security, both economically and politically, and those who terrorize people or assassinate individuals without cause. He noted that he fights only extremism and young extremists who want to murder innocents.

In statements published today by the newspaper AL-MASA', the interior minister denied reports that there are 9,000 political detainees in Egypt. He said the number of detainees is about 4,000, of whom there are 300 or 400 narcotics dealers, an equal number of currency traders, some dangerous offenders, and the rest, constituting the majority, are extremists. Zaki Badr affirmed that Egypt is cooperating with Arab and European countries and the United States in security matters. He said delegations from these countries visit Egypt and vice versa. The interior minister noted that terrorism now affects all countries and cooperation is necessary to confront it.

The interior minister challenged those who have claimed that he traveled to Yugoslavia to negotiate with Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir, a defendant in the case of "Egypt's Revolution Organization," to persuade him to return to Egypt. He said some people have alleged that we helped Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir escape. He asked: Why would we help him escape? Everyone is equal before the law, and the law applies to all offenders.

The interior minister asserted that photocopies of documents published by the newspaper AL-WAFD, which alleged that they were documents issued by Interior Ministry departments authorizing officials to put political parties and their leaders under surveillance, are photocopies of forged documents which have no basis in reality. Zaki Badr said: There is absolutely no reason I would put the political parties under surveillance. Furthermore, surveillance cannot be carried out without a judge's order and according to the law. He declared that no judge would agree or permit him to conduct searches or surveillance against any legitimate political party which meets according to the laws of liberty, democracy, and the law governing political parties. If that is the case, he said, there would be no need for me to take any improper measure.

Sidqi Presents Bill Extending Emergency Law

NC202207 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] The People's Assembly continued its sessions under the chairmanship of Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub this morning. At the beginning of the meeting, Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi announced a bill extending the emergency law for a new period, from 1 May 1988 to 31 May 1991. He explained that the causes that prompted the government to keep the emergency law in force are that there is nothing to indicate that terrorism will end anytime soon, and by keeping this law in force we safeguard democracy. He affirmed that the government is committed to implementing the law within the narrowest limits and added that its application will not harm any individual who expresses legitimate ideas or views. He also noted that the law's implementation will be restricted by the Constitution and law. The prime minister added that the emergency law is subordinate to the courts, and its implementation will take place within a strict legitimate framework.

Interior Minister Zaki Badr made a statement in which he announced that the emergency law is actually used for the good of the majority of the people and is designed to maintain security and guarantee liberty. He asserted that emergency law measures will not be used without necessary cause. The People's Assembly referred the bill to a joint committee consisting of the General Committee, the Legislative Committee's Bureau, and the Committee for Defense and National Security. The People's Assembly continued discussions on the government's policy to fight narcotics.

3-Year Extension Approved

NC202223 Cairo MENA in English 2200 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, March 20 (MENA)—Renewal of the emergency law up to May 31, 1991 was made here tonight by the People's Assembly (parliament), which approved the move in a session under its speaker Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub following an extensive debate on the republican emergency law prolongation decree.

The law ran into the opposition of all the deputies of the opposition Socialist Labour Party and the opposition Wafd Party with the exception, however, of Mahmud Ra'fat 'Umar, a Wafd deputy. Independent deputies Faruq al-Mutawalli and 'Ali 'Abbas rejected the law, whereas Dr Hamdi al-Sayyid and Counsellor al-Dimirdash al-'Iqabi, who are two deputies of the ruling National Democratic Party, abstained.

24 Arrested After Disturbances in Al-Matariyah

NC220828 Cairo MENA in English 0820 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, March 22 (MENA)—An official source at the Ministry of Interior said today that total calm now prevailed the city of Al-Matariyah, Al-Daqahliyah Governorate, following the acts of violence and sabotage witnessed by the city last night and perpetrated by members of the family of a man who died on Friday and was buried yesterday. The source said this person was driving a launch in the Al-Manzilah Lake on Friday,

when a police force on a search campaign in the lake requested him to stop to investigate his papers and his cargo, as the [word indistinct] is known to be exploited in smuggling free zone goods, and in illegal fishing. The driver of the launch refused to stop and fled but while fleeing he collided with one of the lake's islands, hit his head in the structure of the launch, and fell overboard in the water. The man died of his wounds upon arrival at the hospital, the source said.

A forensic medicine report said the deceased suffered from a fractured skull and died of brain hemorrhage. The public prosecution investigated the incident and permitted the burial of the body, the source added. The Interior Ministry source said the body was transported last night to Al-Matariyah, the birthplace of the deceased, and following the burial procedures, some members of the deceased family joined by some instigators, threw stones on some public buildings, police stations, means of public transport and some stores which were on their way.

They burnt six public transport buses, one fire brigade vehicle, and smashed the panes of the Al-Matariyah courtroom, the frontpanes of three stores and of the Al-Daqahliyah Bank, the source said. The troublemakers have been immediately confronted and the situation controlled, and 24 instigators apprehended, while the prosecution has been notified and is investigating the incident, the source said. A number of senior Interior Ministry officials moved to the scene of troubles, under the assistant interior minister for security to supervise the security situation, the source added.

Mubarak Reportedly Refuses Sidqi's Resignation

PM211559 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 15 Mar 88 p 1

[Muhammad Nawwar Report: "Mubarak Refuses To Relieve 'Atif Sidqi!"]

[Text] AL-SHA'B has learned from reliable ministerial sources that President Mubarak turned down a request submitted last week by [Prime Minister] Dr 'Atif Sidqi to be relieved of his position after the government's policies have failed—a fact demonstrated during discussion of the government's policy in the fields of tourism and supply at the People's Assembly.

Meanwhile, a responsible source confirmed to AL-SHA'B that the Council of Ministers meeting which President Mubarak convened last Saturday evening showed the government as failing completely to provide for the citizens' needs. It was also proved at that meeting that Fu'ad Sultan has departed from the ministry's line in the field of tourism. Furthermore, the president requested the supply minister to put a limit on his press statements, which have caused confusion among citizens. At the same time, the president warned against departing from the government's plans and requested ministers to adhere to them. He also requested the industry minister to secure urgent solutions to the problem of stagnation in the spinning and weaving industry.

AL-WAFD Report on Mubarak-'Arafat Talks

JN212100 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 20 Mar 88 pp 1, 2

[Text] AL-WAFD has learned that President Husni Mubarak's talks with Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat have dealt with the issue of U.S.-Palestinian dialogue. 'Arafat informed President Mubarak of the PLO conditions before it declares its agreement on such a dialogue. Among these conditions are: the PLO's right to define members of the Palestinian delegation who may participate in the dialogue; the U.S. recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state; and considering the Palestinian demands raised during the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue as a preliminary draft of the negotiations which will be held on the Palestine question at the international conference.

AL-WAFD has also learned that President Mubarak and 'Arafat discussed names of the delegation's candidates who may participate in such a dialogue. Among the candidiates are: Fayiz Abu Rahmah, Edward Sa'id, Khalid al-Hasan, and six others. Talks also dealt with the recent U.S. proposals carried by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. President Mubarak asserted to the Palestinian leader that there is an intention to inform the U.S. Administration of a unified Arab reply. This reply will set numerous conditions to agree on Shultz' proposals, including the need for Israel to approve an international conference prior to any future negotiations.

'Source' Denies Shooting of Palestinians

NC201035 Cairo MENA in English 1022 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, March 20 (MENA)—An Egyptian official source today affirmed that the claims of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir that other regional states including Egypt were shooting Palestinians who take part in demonstrations mirrors his insistence on foregoing facts as well as his inability to justify the atrocities committed by Israel against Palestinians.

Commenting on Shamir's claims in which he tried to justify the Israeli atrocities and brutal practices against Palestinians, the source said it was better for Shamir to talk about a just and comprehensive peace and announce his readiness to admit the Palestinian people's right to live instead of relinquishing his obligation and responsibility under fabricted groundless claims.

Presidential Aide Al-Baz Returns From Tunisia

NC200814 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0630 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—Dr Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary of the Foreign Ministry and head of the President's Office for Political Affairs, returned to Cairo early this morning after a 3-day visit to Tunisia. During his visit, he met Tunisian President Zine El

Abidine Ben Ali. Al-Baz conveyed to the Tunisian president a verbal message from President Husni Mubarak, inviting him to visit Egypt. He also briefed the Tunisian president on Egypt's position on recent Middle East developments. [passage omitted]

Information Head on Libyan Relations, U.S. Aid
JN181347 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic
15 Mar 88 p 11

[Interview with Dr Mamduh al-Biltaji, head of the Information Authority, by Muhammad al-Shiti in Cairo—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Shiti] Can one view the flexible Egyptian stand on the Libyan planes as an indication of Egypt's desire to move closer to Libya?

[Al-Biltaji] Egypt's stand toward the Arab brothers is principled. It has not changed and will not change. The Egyptian people and leadership work and call for the enhancement of Arab solidarity, and for discarding division among the Arab brothers. This clearly appears in all the stands, political initiatives, and general guidelines of the Egyptian policy under President Husni Mubarak. This is one of the constants of Egyptian policy. We believe that there are no fundamental contradictions between any two Arab people. We are advocates of unity, coordination, solidarity, and joint pan-Arab action. This principled pan-Arab stand is not something new.

[Al-Shiti] Is there really any problem between Egypt and Libya?

[Al-Biltaji] From the Egyptian point of view, there are no fundamental differences between Libya and Egypt. We believe that the problem consists of some stands the Libyan regime used to adopt toward Egypt and its people from time to time, not to mention the lack of credibility of some Libyan promises to improve bilateral relations following visits by Libyan delegations to Egypt in the past. Egypt's stand has been and continues to be the following: We have no regional designs or border disputes with Libya. We also have no designs to impose our hegemony on Libya or interfere in its domestic affairs. All we want is a similar Libyan stand that will be constant and not change often. All we ask is to establish a relationship with Libya that is based on good neighborliness and mutual respect, and that our dealings and even our differences in viewpoint be tackled in refined diplomatic and informational language. We also ask for the suspension of the uncivilized media campaigns against the Egyptian people, Egypt's history, sacrifices, and role, and against the Egyptian leadership and its pan-Arab policies.

Therefore, we would like to reaffirm once again that the stand of the Egyptian leadership on the issue of the Libyan planes is part of this firm policy seeking to support the efforts for clearing Arab atmospheres. It also stems from Egypt's longstanding traditions and the ethics of Egyptian political action.

[Al-Shiti] Does Egypt have any role in the four Libyan planes' seeking refuge with it? Is there an Egyptian intelligence penetration of the Libyan Air Force? Does Egypt play any role of instigation in all the operations during which Libyan planes sought refuge with it?

[Al-Biltaji] With respect to the recent landing of the Libyan planes, and with respect to similar operations in the past or that will take place in the future, we must explain from a principled point of view that we do not incite anybody to come to Egypt or to seek asylum in it. But at the same time our traditions and heritage do not allow us to deny political asylum to anybody. This is the essence of Egyptian policy. Egypt is an Arab country which is open to all the Arab brothers who wish to come to it. It is our duty and part of our traditions to protect all those who seek political asylum. If those who are granted political asylum wish to return to their country, they are free to do so.

[Al-Shiti] Is the speedy return of the Libyan planes within the framework of the Saudi mediation between Egypt and Libya?

[Al-Biltaji] His Majesty King Fahd of Saudi Arabia contacted His Excellency President Husni Mubarak with respect to the four planes. Egypt is open to these contacts. We listen to any attempt to clear the atmosphere between us and any other Arab country. Our stand on this issue is clear and we have repeatedly outlined it. All we want is that good intentions prevail, as well as sincere stands.

[Al-Shiti] Has the Saudi mediation succeeded?

[Al-Biltaji] All that I can confirm here is that the declared Egyptian intentions are completely in line with the Egyptian policy, based on the principles I have already outlined. Within the framework of these principles, we seek to clear the Arab atmosphere, welcome any Arab rapprochement, and emphasize that we and the Libyan people are bound by relations of good-neighborliness, common history, the same geographic location, and common destiny. We only have amity and fraternal sentiments toward the fraternal Libyan people, and we wish them development, prosperity, and peace. Is "Egypt's Revolution" a real organization, or mere statements signed by this name? Do you think "Egypt's Revolution" enjoys foreign support or is it an internal Egyptian affair?

[Al-Biltaji] Allow me to affirm to you that there is a firmly entrenched tradition in Egypt to respect the judiciary, its neutrality and independence, and there is confidence in those watching over justice. This issue is

now in the hands of the judiciary, and nobody should interfere in it by either expressing an opinion or making a comment, analysis, or speculation.

[Al-Shiti] Have your investigations proven that Khalid Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir was involved in this organization?

[Al-Biltaji] The prosecution has announced the bill of indictment and referred the case to the court in accordance with the published articles of the law. The Egyptian judiciary will then look into this case. Therefore, all should refrain from interference or comment. The prevailing law is that the accused is innocent until proven guilty. The side in charge of defining responsibility and applying the provisions of the law is the Egyptian judiciary. We respect the Constitution, which is based on the principle of separation of powers, the sovereignty of the law, and the independence of the judiciary.

[Al-Shiti] This means it has not yet been proved that there is an organization called "Egypt's Revolution" and that Kalid 'Abd al-Nasir was involved in it.

[Al-Biltaji] Please do not push me into commenting on a case given to the Egyptian judiciary, which is fully independent and has a sacred mission. Once again I wish to refer you to the declared official bill of indictment without any comment, analysis, or interference on our side.

[Al-Shiti] The Mosad threatened to assassinate Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir. What would your stand be if this happened?

[Al-Biltaji] Frankly speaking, this is not a press question. If this question is meant to provoke me, I would like to reassure you that I will never be provoked. Allow me to ask, in turn, how can such a question be posed to any official or ordinary citizen? Nevertheless, I do not refuse to answer any question although it might not be a question in the professional sense. Therefore, I would like to emphasize that no sovereign state accepts another state's official or unofficial interference in its internal affairs. No state accepts any threat to any of its citizens by any other state or organ belonging to that state, even if that citizen is a defendant. Any state that respects itself is responsible for the protection of its security and that of its citizens. This state's organs and judiciary alone are responsible for the implementation of the law and the establishment of public security. This is a natural matter about which there is no disagreement. Hence, no serious question is posed to me so that I can answer it otherwise. [passage omitted]

[Al-Shiti] What is the impact of U.S. aid on the freedom of Egyptian decisionmaking?

[Al-Biltaji] This has completely ended in Egypt since the 23 July National Revolution. No super or medium-sized power, be it regional or international, can influence Egyptian decisionmaking. Egyptian decisions stem from the independent Egyptian will and are aimed at realizing the national interests of Egypt and the Arab nation. All of Egypt's options and decisions stem from its assessment of its national and pan-Arab interests as well as the interests of its people and the Arab nation, in harmony with its role and mission within the vital circles of Egyptian existence, represented by the Arab world and the African and Islamic states, and within the framework of the Nonaligned Movement. These are the vital circles of Egyptian existence and the Egyptian movement. National Egyptian decisions are independent, and this matter is regrettably known by foreigners before brothers. Nobody can undermine Egyptian sovereignty or Egyptian decisionmaking.

[Al-Shiti] Has this aid deprived Cairo of the military option?

[Al-Biltaji] The Egyptian decision regarding the establishment of peace with Israel, the rejection of war and military action, and the efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement through negotiations is an explicit Egyptian decision linked to the Arab and Egyptian situation, to the political intuition of the people and the leadership, to an accurate assessment of regional and international developments, and to past experience regarding the conflict. Therefore, it is a genuine Egyptian decision based on these principles. The option of negotiations and a just and comprehensive peace is a strategic and not a tactical option. However, there is a great difference between this option and that of disarming Egypt.

Egypt will never abandon its arms because there will be no peace without a deterrent force to protect and secure it. In fact, all figures, statistics, reports, and studies by all military analysts show that Egypt's military ability has increased during the past years and in times of peace. Moreover, the capacity of Egypt's production of weapons and military industries has developed in an unprecedented manner. The Egyptian arms industry has become an export industry. Egyptian experts and scientists have developed military systems and Western and Eastern combat equipment, the high quality of which has been approved by foreign experts themselves.

Thus, there is a continuous growth of Egypt's defensive military capabilities and the Egyptian forces' efficiency. This does not mean that they will be used in the operations theatres directly, but this means that they are an existing deterrent force. There are several states of a supreme military capability that are not used to wage wars or battles at this time. I mean that the military option must eventually serve the comrehensive strategic framework of pan-Arab interests and the general political approach. War is not an objective in itself, and it must not be so. Once again I say that most of the states that have supreme defensive and military capabilities live in peace.

[Al-Shiti] At the beginning of the uprising, it was noted that there was a quick and concentrated response with statements by the Egyptian Government denouncing the Israeli repression. Then this abated. What is the reason?

[Al-Biltaji] This is untrue. On the contrary, Egypt was among the first Arab states to denounce the Israeli repression in the occupied Arab territories, on the West Bank and Gaza in particular. Official statements also continued to be issued on all levels in this regard. Moreover, Egypt is not only seeking to put its stands on the record but is working seriously to change the fait accompli. This is because we are a serious and responsible nation. After these statements had been issued, someone had to hold the reins of the initiative. There is a Palestinian uprising that broke out to foil the Israeli fait accompli, which is based on repression and military occupation, and to prove that the Palestinian people's cause will never die and that the generations of Palestinian youths who were born under the occupation reject it.

These youths have refuted the claims of those who said there is a fait accompli and a stable situation in the occupied territories and that those who call for the restoration of Palestinian rights are only the organizations outside the occupied territory. Thus, the uprising has created a new situation. Someone had to exploit this new situation and safeguard the impetus that was created inside the Israeli community itself, its ruling institutions, the entire international community, and the international Jewish organizations and communities. Someone had to assume the responsibility and to hold the reins of the initiative. Within this framework falls President Mubarak's initiative, which called for holding the international peace conference, and the large-scale political moves that followed it. This initiative included cohesive ideas that constituted an indivisible whole.

[Al-Shiti] Do you mean President Mubarak's initiative after the uprising, or the old one?

[Al-Biltaji] I mean that initiative that President Mubarak announced following his Gulf tour and before his tour of Europe, the United States, and the Arab Maghreb at the end of January. This initiative was specifically made to invest the impetus resulting from the Palestinian uprising, to reactivate the peace efforts, and to urge the holding of the international conference to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. This is Egypt's stand.

Egypt does not find it enough to denounce, condemn, and issue communiques and statements. It works to change reality, end the Israeli occupation, and exploit the momentum resulting from the uprising to achieve this objective. This is because this uprising, which has constituted one of the new political facts in the Middle East and has had wide repercussions, may be subjected to a great danger if it is left alone, as it may be subjected to continuous repression or may undergo a state of self-erosion with the passage of time and continued repression. Consequently, it may come to nought. What is important is to exploit the uprising to convene an international conference and establish a just peace.

[Al-Shiti] Can we say the Egyptian stand has developed from a swift, direct move and denunciation of the repression against the uprising into a practical move, through holding contacts with the Gulf, America, and Europe?

[Al-Biltaji] It is a continuous move that takes into consideration the right time and suitability at various stages. It is a single pan-Arab move. Naturally, we denounce and condemn. We are against these repressive measures. We do not hesitate to announce our stands. We were the first to announce such stands. However, this is not enough. This was followed by that effective and active political move represented by holding a wide-scale set of intensive international contacts and presenting Egyptian ideas concerning the exploitation of the momentum resulting from the Palestinian uprising, as I have explained.

[Al-Shiti] We have noticed that there has been no enthusiasm toward President Mubarak's initiative. Immediate U.S. ideas followed. Are these ideas meant to repalce Mubarak's initiative, or just to complement it?

[Al-Biltaji] We believe the Egyptian initative has been widely successful and achieved its goal, which is to invigorate the standstill and end the worldwide lack of concern prevailing at the time. Naturally, this initiative was welcomed and appreciated by the European states and the United States. A large number of states explicitly announced full support for this initiative and for the convening of an international peace conference. The U.S. Administration moved. Philip Habib, Richard Murphy, and George Shultz were dispatched in successive missions as a result of a new conviction by the U.S. Administration in light of the Palestinian uprising, the developments resulting from it, and the effect of the Egyptian inititive and intensive Egyptian contacts with the U.S. Administration. That move came as a response to Egyptian assertions that the current situation is unacceptable and that efforts must be intensified to boost the peace process and convene an international conference, which is the only currently acceptable formula to reach a comprehensive, just, and durable solution to the dispute.

[Al-Shiti] Have there been contacts with Israel to ease the repression of the Palestinian uprising?

[Al-Biltaji] We exploit all our contacts with Israel to serve the pan-Arab move we talked about. You know that the Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister visited Israel, raised the issue of an international conference, and attempted to convince the Shamir government of that. However, the Shamir government did not change its stand. We continue to work and hold contacts with all parties to urge movement and action, change the status quo, and establish a just and comprehensive peace.

[Al-Shiti] Has there been any discussion with Israel regarding the uprising?

[Al-Biltaji] There are existing channels. There is diplomatic representation, which is being exploited to serve the overall Egyptian ideas, stands, and policies.

[Al-Shiti] It is being said that the Egyptian opposition is preparing to organize a popular procession of 1 million Arabs to head for Israel. What is your stand on this idea? Would it be allowed if an official request has been submitted?

[Al-Biltaji] Actually, this is the first time I have heard about this matter. We know nothing about this issue. At any rate, this issue does not exist. What is published by the Kuwaiti press or others does not bind the Egyptian Government or the Egyptian opposition. [passage omitted]

Shamir's Visit 'Real Test' for U.S. Attitude

JN191247 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 16 Mar 88 p 5

[Editorial: "Shamir and Swimming Against the Current"]

[Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir went to Washington to affirm once again to the government of U.S. President Ronald Reagan his rejection of the last U.S. peace initiative. But before he did he received a number of slaps from the European Community and European Parliament, which showed the European Continent's deep resentment against the Israeli authorities' savage and inhuman manner of suppressing the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories.

Reports from the United States—the bastion of support for Israel—indicate that a number of U.S. Zionist organizations are displeased with Shamir's rejection of the proposals presented by Shultz during his two recent tours of the Middle East. Also, some 30 senators, most of whom are strong defenders of Israel, have signed a statement supporting the secretary of state's proposals to Israel. We say, despite all that, Shamir has continued to stubbornly and arrogantly reject these proposals.

There is no doubt that the Israeli prime minister is hoping to win the support of the U.S. Democratic and Republican Parties for his strange attitude toward peace efforts by exploiting this year's congressional and presidential elections in the United States, an opportunity which Israel has exploited successfully in the last few decades. But the situation differs this time. U.S. and world public opinion are still following the ugly picture which it sees in the various news media about the savage methods which the Israeli forces are using against the people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, in order to silence their demand for freedom.

The results of Shamir's visit to the United States—his talks with President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz, his meetings with Israel's supporters in the Congress and the Jewish organizations—will be the real test for judging the U.S. Government's credibility, true intentions, and seriousness toward achieving a comprehensive solution to the region's problems.

'Positive Sign' Seen in U.S. Peace Efforts

NC192210 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2125 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 19 Mar (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR paper stresses that the U.S. Government's determination to continue its endeavors for a settlement of the Middle East problems, despite Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's attempts to thwart these endeavors and his rejection of the U.S. proposals and the international peace conference, constitutes a positive sign on the part of Washington. It indicates that Washington is serious in its desire to do something in the last few months of President Reagan's term in office.

The paper calls on the Arabs, who hope that the U.S. Government applies some kind of pressure on Shamir, to remember the facts about the ties between Washington and Tel Aviv, particularly during a year of presidential and congressional elections, which will be held in November. Such circumstances usually allow Israel to apply pressure on any authority in power in the United States, the paper adds.

The paper, in its issue to appear Sunday, calls on the Arabs not to give in to these facts. The Arabs are requested to do their best to support the U.S. stand and to back and build on any proposals acceptable to them, particularly since Washington seems to be adhering to the idea of an international peace conference, as demonstrated by a U.S. State Department declaration that it would be impossible to proceed with the peace process without this conference.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Cable from King Hassan II

LD220927 Tripoli JANA in English 0825 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, Mirrikh [March] 22, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution received a cable of thanks and gratitude from King Hassan II in reply to the greetings the leader had sent to him on the throne feast day.

Jallud Returns From Visits to Tunisia, Algeria

LD201542 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1330 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jalud returned to Tripoli this afternoon at the end of a working visit to the two sisterly countries of Algeria and Tunisia. During his visit he met Presidents Chadli Bendjedid and Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. [passage omitted]

Sudan's Al-Mirghani Concludes Visit 21 Mar

LD211547 Tripoli JANA in English 0930 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Al-Bayan al-Awal, Mirrikh [March] 21, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Mr. Ahmad al-Mirghani, president of the Supreme Council of sisterly Sudan, and his accompanying delegation left Al-Bayan al-Awal (Banghazi) yesterday.

He was seen off by an official and people's delegation spearheaded by Col. Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander-in-chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, apart from the secretary of the people's congress, secretary of the People's Committee of Banghazi Municipality, a number of the secretaries of the people's congresses and the people's committees in this municipality, a number of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces officers, Sudan's ambassador in Tripoli, a number of the members of the diplomatic corps accredited to Great Al-Jamahiriyah, secretaries of the Sudanese People's Committees and members of the movement of the Sudanese Revolutionary Committees in Banghazi Municipality.

Commenting to JANA, Mr. al-Mirghani has paid tribute to the historic deed done by the leader of the revolution in breaking down the prison and releasing the prisoners therein as well as allowing those Libyans prevented from travelling to be free to travel anywhere. He adds that the celebrations in rejoice of freedom is but a confirmation of the principles the leader of the revolution has been fighting for. He also lauds the civilized achievements accomplished by the Great Al-Fatih Revolution. He adds that Sudan places all its potentials at the disposal of brotherly Palestinian in their revolution waged by the intrepid children of stones.

Tunisian Minister of State Arrives in Tripoli

LD212211 Tripoli JANA in English 1721 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, Mirrikh [March] 21, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—This morning Mondher Znaidi the minister of state for industry and trade in sisterly Tunisia arrived in Tripoli with his accompanying delegation on a visit to Great Jamahiriyah.

Meets With Treasury Secretary

LD220944 Tripoli JANA in English 0840 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, Mirrikh [March] 22, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The secretary general of the General People's Committee for the Treasury met in Tripoli at noon yesterday with "Mondher Znaidi" the minister of state for industry and trade in sisterly Tunisia.

Ghanaian Foreign Minister Arrives on Visit

LD211045 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0930 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, 21 March—Captain Kojo Tsikata, PNDC member in charge of foreign affairs and security of the Republic of Ghana, arrived in Tripoli last night for a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

He was welcomed upon arrival at the airport by Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces; the brother secretary of the People's General Committee for Information and Culture; the brother secretary of the People's General Committee for the Treasury; and the Ghanaian ambassador and staff from the Ghanaian Embassy.

Capt Kojo Tsikata, in a statement to JANA, expressed his happiness over his visit to the Great Jamahiriyah, which he considers as his second country. He said: This visit will be an opportunity to bolster the relations between the two countries, as well as to coordinate their stances against imperialism and colonialism, particularly in southern Africa. Moreover, it is an opportunity to review the two countries' economic relations, and to follow up the minutes that were signed in Ghana.

Capt Tsikata is accompanied by Dr Kwesi Botchway, the secretary for finance and economic planning, and Kofi Quakyi, the secretary for information.

Turkish Trade and Industry Minister Arrives

LD211016 Tripoli JANA in English 0828 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, Mirrikh [March] 21, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Sukru Yurur, the minister of industry and trade in Turkey, and the delegation in his company last night arrived in Tripoli on a visit to Great Jamahiriya. The Turkish minister made a statement to the correspondent of JANA expressing his pleasure and that of the delegation in his company at visiting Great Jamahiriyah.

He said "I am carrying the greetings of Turgut Ozal to the Libyan Arab people and we are following with interest the existing development of relations between the two countries with appreciation and admiration."

Meets Sharnanah, Begins Talks

TA211810 Ankara Domestic Service in Turkish 1700 GMT 21 mar 88

[Text] Industry and Commerce Minister Sukru Yurur, currently on an official visit to Libya, has begun his contacts in Tripoli. Yurur met with Libyan Economy and Trade Minister Farhat Sharnanah. The two ministers discussed the possibilities for industrial cooperation between Turkey and Libya. Later, joint economic committee meetings began between delegations headed by Yurur and Sharnanah.

Addressing the opening session of the talks, Yurur recalled that the two countries cooperate in many fields. He said Turkey hopes to establish new foundations for healthier bilateral cooperation based on mutual interests and developing the existing cooperation. Yurur, who will also tour some industrial installations in Libya, will return to Turkey on 24 March.

USSR Youth, Student Officials Arrive for Talks

LD212223 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The chairman of the USSR Council of Students and the deputy chairman of youth organizations in the Soviet Union arrived in Tripoli this evening on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

In statements to JANA, they expressed their pleasure at visiting the Great Jamahiriyah as well as their pride in the great historical action by which the brother leader demolished the prison and freed the prisoners. They also affirmed the right of the Palestinian Arab people to self-determination and to establish their independent state.

Concerning the relations linking the students of the Great Jamahiriyah and the students of the Soviet Union, they said these relations are very good and that the common issues for strengthening them will be discussed.

Morocco

Sudan's Al-Mirghani Arrives on Official Visit

LD202156 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Ahmad al-Mirghani, chairman of the State Council of the Republic of Sudan, held talks today with His Majesty King Hassan II at the start of his official visit to Morocco Further details are provided by the radio station in Marrakech:

[Correspondent] Ahmad al-Mirghani, chairman of the State Council of the Democratic Republic of Sudan, began an official visit to our country today. The Sudanese guest was welcomed on arrival at Al-Manarah airport in Marrakech by His Majesty King Hassan II, who was accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed and His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rashid. [passage omitted]

After an initial private talk between His Majesty King Hassan II and the chairman of the Sudanese State Council, Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed accompanied Ahmad Al-Mirghani to his residence in Marrakech.

Honored at Dinner Banquet

LD212106 Rabat MAP in English 1205 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Marrakesh, Mar 21 (MAP)—King Hassan II offered Sunday evening in Marrakesh a dinner banquet in honor of visiting President of the Sudanese Supreme Council Ahmad al-Mirghani. In an address on the occasion, King Hassan, who was accompanied by Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed and Prince Moulay Rashid, highlighted the historical relations between the two countries. He particularly stressed the wealth of spiritual contribution each made to enrich the other's heritage, particularly in spreading and promoting "Sufism" (an orthodox Islamic 'path' based of tolerance and science). King Hassan also stressed Sudan's role in safeguarding the "sunna" (prophet's traditions) and authentic Arab heritage in Africa.

Al-Mirghani too stressed historical ties between the two countries and their similar spiritual choices, like the "Maleki" rite. He said the work of the two countries' joint commissions was the expression of sincere determination to further develop these relations.

Al-Mirghani [words indistinct] tribute to King Hassan's role in favour of the Arab and Islamic world, expressing great admiration for the "exemplary" development Morocco has known "under your enlightened guidance and that of your illustrious predecessors". The Sudanese president had arrived earlier on Sunday on an official visit at the invitation of King Hassan II.

Zairian President Concludes Visit, Departs

LD192255 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Excerpt] We have just received the following news item: The Zairian president, Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko, left Morocco this morning after a visit during which he was received by his Majesty Hassan II in Marrakech. [passage omitted]

Briefs

Meeting With Czech Ambassador

Rabat, March 11, (MAP)—Moroccan Minister of Equipment, Staff and Vocational Training Mohamed Kabbaj Thursday conferred here with Czech Ambassador Bedrich Illek, at the end of the latter's mission to Morocco, on bilateral cooperation. The two sides reviewed the relations existing between the two countries and mainly between their equipment and vocational training departments. Illek expressed satisfaction at the level reached by these relations namely in technical areas. [Text] [*LD120132 Rabat MAP in English 1221 GMT 11 Mar 88*]

Sudan

Al-Mahdi, Delegation Leave for Djibouti 21 Mar

JN211518 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Khartoum, 21 Mar (SUNA)—Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi left the country for Djibouti at 0700 this morning to attend the meetings of the governmental body of the eastern and central African countries for combating drought and desertification. The meetings are scheduled for 22 and 23 March.

The prime minister is accompanied by a delegation made up of Ma'mum Sanadah, minister of foreign affairs, and Major General Burma Nasir, minister of state for defense, who will also participate in the meetings of the joint Sudanese-Ethiopian ministerial committee scheduled to be held there on the sidelines of the body's meetings.

Ministers Decide on Refugee Issue Initiatives

JN191947 Khartoum SUNA in English 1750 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Khartoum, March 19 (SUNA)—A meeting presided over by Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi today decided that Sudan will present two initiatives on the influx of refugees into Sudan from neighbouring countries and the transference of relief supplies to the areas affected by the riots in some Sudanese regions. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Ma'mun Sanadah, Social Welfare Minister Rashidah Ibrahim 'Abd al-Karim, State Minister for Defence Fadlallah Burmah Nasir, Commissioner for Relief and Rehabilitation Kamil Shawqi, and Commissioner for Refugees Hasan 'Atiyah. The two initiatives will be submitted to the High Commissioner for Refugees and the Society of the Red Cross.

Tunisia

Ben Ali Makes Statement on Independence Day

LD211142 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 0000 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpts] On the occasion of independence day President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali made the following statement on Tunisian radio and television:

[Begin recording] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Citizens, tomorrow we will welcome with great pride an anniversary that is dear to all Tunisians. It is a great occasion at which we will in humility and awe salute the pious souls of martyrs who gave their pure blood and lives for the sake of Tunisia's pride and glory. [passage omitted]

Citizens, the country's independence and its maintenance are subject to its self-sufficiency and continued economic growth. Tunisia's impregnability depends on the comradeship, solidarity, and unity of its sons on all issues. National consensus on difficult options that serve the country and its interests is a fundamental condition to consolidate the country's independence and strengthen its impregnability. Out of our belief that our country's independence, our territorial integrity, our homeland's impregnability, and our people's progress are the responsibility of all Tunisians, and that loving the homeland, defending it, and raising its position are the sacred duty of all citizens. We embarked on a change at the 7 November proceeding from a position of responsibility. We sought to strengthen that which had been twisted and to correct the deviation that had contaminated the country's march in recent years, and return the country to its correct path and the right direction, which is deemed acceptable for it by its sons. In this context we granted presidential pardons to other groups of inmates, out of our eagerness to consolidate harmony and forgiveness.

Citizens, the Tunisian citizen is now different from what he was on the eve of independence. Since that date the country has given birth to a new generation whose creation we will celebrate immediately after independence day and give our utmost attention. [passage omitted]

On this basis we have adopted a new method of dealing with issues and have called for changing the language of addressing and dealing with the new reality. We have adopted a host of measures to consolidate democracy and spread justice and peace of mind, and we have reaffirmed our determination to protect the national community's wealth and gains, thus preparing a more favorable climate for the country's further advancement in all its vital fields. With the same conviction and belief we will, with God's help, move forward to achieve the desired objectives. [passage omitted]

Pardons Over 2,000 Convicts

LD211105 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] This morning at the presidential palace in Carthage, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali chaired a working session which was attended by Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche, the minister of state for justice, and the director general of prisons and reforms at the Interior Ministry. The session was devoted to reviewing the files of convicts, one at a time in accordance with the proposals of the amnesty committee and the committee on conditional discharge, that were put before the head of state on independence day.

In embodying the 7 November declaration concerning bolstering the supremacy of the rule of law and renouncing animosity, hatred, and rancor and cherishing the establishment of accord and fraternity among all Tunisians, regardless of their leanings and trends, while affirming the need not to be complacent concerning the wealth of the national community and its gains, and after

examining all the files, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali issued a presidential decree pardoning 2,044 of those convicted. He also reduced the penalties of some and dropped the remainder of the sentences of others, and reduced the remaining sentences by half. The pardon also included cancelling fines imposed for minor offenses in favor of those who proved their inability to pay, out of consideration for their social circumstances.

In the framework of a series of measures aimed at encouraging the press, in appreciation of its mission, and stemming from President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's keen desire to strengthen the press so it can discharge its duty in the best way during the new era, his excellency ordered all offenses against which a sentence had been passed under the press law be dropped.

On this occasion, 1,275-persons will enjoy the restoration of rights and 182 were granted conditional discharge. Concerning persons who are fugitive and whose cases have a political aspect, the examination of their cases depends on rectifying their conditions through the judiciary in accordance with the requirements of the law. It is hoped that the pardons will affect their hearts and be fully appreciated, and that tranquillity will prevail so everyone will work and contribute to building Tunisia and realize its invulnerability.

Al-Qadhdhafi Praises Order

LD211852 Tripoli JANA in English 1712 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, Mirrikh [March] 21, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution sent the following cable to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of sisterly Tunisia:

"Brother President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, your presidential order on the national day of independence to reduce and cancel the sentences of more than 2,000 prisoners and the restoration of the rights of a similar number and the granting of conditional release for tens is considered a completion of liberty's victory on our Arab land and a practical siding to the Arab citizen who suffers from internal supression between the ocean and the gulf and the external oppression from colonialism and Zionism.

"Your decision is characterized by real revolutionary courage.

"From us you have our support and congratulation.

"Forward, and the revolutionary struggle continues. Your brother...Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi."

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had decided to grant amnesty to a group of prisoners in Tunisia in an address to the Arab people of Tunisia marking the 32nd anniversary of the victory of Tunisia's Arabism over the French colonialist.

Western Sahara

Polisario Front Leaders Seek Contacts in Egypt

PM211605 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 16 Mar 88 p 9

[Unattributed report: "Polisario Delegation in Cairo"]

[Text] Informed diplomatic sources have revealed that three members of the Polisario Front made a visit to Cairo. One of the three was Mohamed Salem Ould Salek, Polisario Political Bureau member and secretary general of the presidency of what is known as the "Saharan Republic." According to informed sources, the three members were able to enter Egypt after obtaining passports given to them by the foreign ministry of one of the neighboring states.

The three members made great efforts to contact some of the Egyptian political circles and media, especially those of the opposition. Observers believe that the Polisario members chose this time to visit Egypt to harm Egyptian-Moroccan relations. Their visit follows the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries and last month's working fraternal visit by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak to Morocco and his meeting with King Hassan II.

President Interviewed on War, Other Issues

JN200730 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 18 Mar 88 pp 1, 3, 5, 7

[Interview with President Saddam Husayn by Ibrahim Nafi', AL-AHRAM board of directors chairman and editor in chief, in Cairo—date not given]

[Text] Question: There was a saying at the turn of the century: When Paris sneezes, all of Europe catches a cold. We in the Arab nation have two countries to which this saying applies, Iraq and Egypt. That's why we have come to Baghdad to be reassured about the situation on the Iraqi front and to hear from you about what is taking place in Iraq. The war of the cities between Iraq and Iran has noticeably escalated over the past few days. Observers expect it to further escalate. Mr President, how do you assess the situation at the front now? Can one set the course of the war in light of the Iranian insistence on prolonging it?

President: When we discuss the war and its developments, we do not waste too much time in speaking about details in order to inform the Egyptian people about the facts. We are convinced and believe that the Egyptians follow the war with an Arab spirit, an Arab heart, and an Arab conscience. Therefore, those who follow the war with an Arab mind, spirit, and conscience can see the facts with their conscience or their minds, before seeing them through visible means. In spite of this, our reply to your question is that the war of the cities is not something new. It has been part of the war since it started. We would like to recall that Iran began the war by striking at cities.

Before 22 September 1980, Iran began shelling our border cities, such as Khanaqin, Mandali, and Zurbatiyah. Exploiting our patience, Iran then began shelling Basra and the oil facilities in Khanaqin and Basra. All this took place before the armies began their wide-scale operations on 22 September 1980. Iran continued to shell cities from time to time. When the Iraqi and Iranian armies clashed in September 1980, God assisted the Iraqis in defeating the Iranians and repulsing their army, which had infiltrated into some Iraqi territory and which was ready to attack other areas on the borders.

The Iraqi Army repulsed the Iranian Army and forced it to withdraw deep inside Iranian territory. This gave our border cities a partial respite because the Iranian artillery could no longer reach them. You know that some of our cities are not far from the borders. Basra for example, is only 22 to 25 km from the borders and was the second major city in Iraq before the war. Therefore, merely by being on the borders the Iranians can shell Basra with their artillery.

When we withdrew to the borders in 1982, this enabled the Iranians to resume their shelling of cities, including Basra. We used to reply with the means we had after issuing warnings. The shelling used to intensify or abate according to the military means the Iranians had at the time. But things changed when the Libyans supplied the Iranians with several missiles and two launching pads. The Iranians were able to use these missiles to attack Baghdad.

Question: I believe they set up these two launching pads near the Iraqi border for this purpose?

President: At any rate, this development began in 1985 when they felt they could shell the capital, Baghdad, while Iraqi missiles would not reach Tehran. They liked the idea and continued to shell Baghdad. However, we replied by using our Air Force. You know of course that using an air force is not like the strike capability of missiles. The air force has to contend with antiaircraft ground defenses, while missiles reach their targets unencumbered. So they went on shelling Baghdad with their missiles. Occasionally, when we reply violently, they slow down, especially when they run out of missiles. But these are only short spells after which they resume their strikes at Baghdad.

This time, it seems they have accumulated a sizeable number of missiles. You know of course that they shelled Baghdad continuously even during the Arab summit, in some kind of defiance to the Arabs. They hit civilian installations, causing loss of life. You remember the attack on Balat al-Shuhada' School, where a number of children were martyred and injured. In August 1987, we announced that we possessed a missile with a 650-km range. It seems the Iranians, who always tell lies, thought the Iraqi announcement was a propaganda gambit and not the real truth. And, although we warned them, they continued shelling Baghdad, Basra, and other cities as some sort of defiance. So our reply came in shelling Tehran and other Iranian cities as a legitimate right to defend ourselves and our sovereignty. This is the story of the war of the cities between Iraq and Iran.

Question: Mr President, you announced the surprise of the missiles, the Al-Husayn missiles, and said there will be other surprises. What did you mean by that?

President: Although I did not announce that and did not speak about the Al-Husayn missile or any other missile, still I must tell you as an Arab, and through you the fraternal Egyptian people and the Arab nation, that Iraq, in defense of its sovereignty, dignity, honor, and principles, will continue to bring news to its Arab brothers on scientific and technological achievements. These achievements will place Iraq and the brothers in the Arab nation in a better position, and also enable us to defend our honor, sovereignty, and rights in an effective and satisfactory manner.

Question: I believe this pleases us all and also pleases all the Arab people.

President: I believe so.

Question: Mr President, Iraq has for years been trying to reach a peaceful settlement, while Iran opposes such a settlement. How do you explain the Iranian side's insistence on the war and rejection of all peaceful solutions? Are there internal or external motives or both for the continuation of this war all these years? Does Iraq's quest for peace stem from military weakness? Moreover, how do you view the Arab stand on the Gulf war and how effective is it? Sorry about the long question.

President: Brother Ibrahim, this is a compound question. These are several questions in one. At any rate let us go back to the ideology which Khomeyni and his henchmen used to raise the slogan of war and aggression against all Arabs and Muslims, and not just Iraqis. You know that the Iranian hostility was not only directed against Iraq. The Iranians attacked Kuwait with their Air Force and missiles. They also attacked Saudi ships and oil tankers. They also attacked the oil tankers and the ships belonging to all the Gulf countries without any exception. They used to attack them. Any such military action could have ignited a war because it constitutes an aggression. When political means fail to prevent an aggression, the need for other means emerges on the horizon.

The Iranian regime began committing aggression against several Arab and non-Arab countries, resorting to the same methods it had used to start its aggression against Iraq before the war took the form of large-scale military operations between the two armies. Before the Iraqi and Iranian armies clashed in large-scale military operations, the Khomeyniite regime had sunk several ships. Some of them were Iraqi ships; others were Philippine ships on their way to Iraq. I also believe it sank a British ship. All this constituted the beginning of Iranian hostility in the Shatt al-'Arab.

Therefore, I say Khomeyni is an aggressor and the Khomeyniite regime is a hostile regime and an expansionist regime. Khomeyni believes he should establish an empire. However, he knows that he cannot deceive the Arab people, the Arab nation, and the Islamic nation, and have them help him to establish an empire, ancient style. That's why he covered his expansionist designs with a religious slogan, through his claim that he wants to establish an Islamic empire.

Khomeyni believes that since it had been easy to establish an Ottoman empire in the past comprising Turks, Arabs, and other Muslims, he could establish a state and a vast empire under the same cover. He also believes that the Iranians, in view of their large numbers, can be deployed in all countries as the cadres of this Islamic state, can control them militarily, and can make this Islamic empire last for ages. Thus, the slogan pertaining to the establishment of an Islamic state is based on the slogan of the velayat-e faqih [rule by jurisconsult] creed as he understands it. He believes that he is God's emissary on earth and that this mission has been delegated to him in the absence of the Imam al-Mahdi. Therefore, according to what they teach, Khomeyni is God's emissary on earth.

In light of this interpretation, Khomeyni considers it his duty to establish an empire that will necessarily be Islamic. Therefore, this is the basic slogan which has brought about this wide hostility. Iraq has been the first to clash with this hostility as it is the first gateway that must be demolished so that Khomeyniite flames can swallow up and incinerate other parts of the Arab homeland, and later other Islamic nations. I would like to stress that this Iranian hostility will continue so long as the Iranians continue to work in accordance with this slogan and this concept. The Iranian motives are based on a deviant and dangerous creed and outlook; the espousal of such an outlook in politics is also deviant and dangerous.

Of course, there has been foreign encouragement of this factor. The Zionists have been the first to encourage it because they found in it a means to harm the Arab nation. That's why we hear from time to time that deals are being concluded between the Khomeyni regime and the Zionist entity and that relations between them are good. At first sight, it would appear strange that a person who considers himself to be the highest religous authority in Iran establishes such a relationship with Zionism. However, when we see that they have the same hostility toward the Arab nation, the same designs, and the same objective of establishing illegal entities, we can understand how coordination can exist between them.

Question: I would like to return to the second part of the question, Mr President. The Iranian side insists on continuing the war. Does Iraq's persistent pursuit of peace mean it seeks to confront the Iranian ideology and aggression?

President: You as an Arab know that when an Arab wants to say hello to sombebody, he says: Peace be upon you. This means that peace is part of the Arabs' thought, behavior, and creed inasmuch as it is part of the essence of the Islamic creed. We believe people resort to war only when they are forced to do so. War is not a basic law of life. The basic law of life is to see the community and citizens live in peace so they can secure their livelihoods, establish family ties under peaceful circumstances, and behave according to the natural and normal laws of life under peaceful circumstances. War is resorted to when people have no other choices, and this necessary resort to war is carried out under certain circumstances. In view of this consideration, we must continue to deal with the basic law of life. We should not allow such a state of emergency to conceal this law from our view.

Our defense of Iraq is not prompted by a desire to exercise our capability within a technical and military framework. We are defending Iraq to provide the Iraqis with peaceful conditions which must be accompanied by

dignity, sovereignty, and suitable circumstances. All these things would give Iraqis the chance to decide on affairs related to their life, their destiny, their present, and their future, without any foreign intervention and without any pressures exerted by others, irrespective of the slogans, the circumstances, and the capabilities employed to effect that intervention.

Question: After Iraq's use of missiles to attack Tehran in reply to Iran's missile bombardment of Baghdad, some UN quarters said that Tehran displayed an implicit readiness to accept Javier Perez de Cuellar's cease-fire plan. What is your conception of the truth regarding Iran's intentions? And, will the Tehran rulers return to their senses and opt for peace?

President: I cannot say the Tehran rulers will not opt for peace. However, I can say that the Tehran rulers will not revert to the criteria employed by rational individuals—the criteria that we understand, because they have a weird mentality. Circumstances have made this clear to the entire world after the Iraqis have become specialized in revealing such facts. The Iraqis have known for a long time that the mentality of the Iranian rulers is different, in terms of thinking and conduct, from that of other rulers. This difference was caused by certain factors and backgrounds that we have already mentioned, and also by other factors and backgrounds that we have not had chance to talk about.

I say that the Iranian rulers may opt for peace one day. However, the adoption of such an option will not be prompted by normal factors which dictate a return to sense and the sound path. The adoption of such an option will be prompted by a belief that war will make them lose more than what they can win. If such a conviction is generated because of internal Iranian factors, because of failure in the fields of combat, and also because of Arab and international influence from external parties on Iran, the Iranians will revert to the peace option. This would not be a response to rational logic. It would be a submission to the realities regarding their inability to achieve their expansionist objectives at the expense of the Arab and the Islamic nation, which were no more than delusions that they have been harboring. So far, the Iranians have not said that they are ready to work toward ending the war. Some of their statements tactically may touch upon the war of the cities in one form or another, ignoring that they are the party who started the war of the cities.

Since the beginning in 1980, they were the party who started the war of the cities. And now, when they last shelled Basra and other Iraqi cities, we warned them, saying that we will retaliate this time. Defiantly, they responded to our warning by bombarding Baghdad. Anyhow, as you know, when we possess the capability, we do not use it to harm others. We use it to defend our rights and ourselves. When we reach the conclusion that the deterrence directed against Iran has conveyed to the Iranians the message which they are supposed to understand, and pushed things in one way or another toward creating circumstances inducive to the establishment of peace, and when we become certain that the Iranians have learned the lesson and that they will not repeat their acts of aggression through shelling cities, naturally, we will reconsider our decision.

Question: In Your Excellency's opinion, what precisely describes the U.S. and Soviet roles in the Gulf War? Do you attach much hope to the next summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev in Moscow in May? Furthermore, what is your opinion on the reports that the UN Security Council will soon adopt a resolution imposing an arms embargo on the side that does not stop the fighting, which is now clearly Iran?

President: I said in my reply to an earlier question that there are internal and external factors in Iran, as well as other factors relating directly to the battlefield, which should make the Iranians understand that the path of war will not lead to the results they hope to achieve. So when they become convinced that war will not achieve their expansionist objectives, it will then be possible to achieve peace. International pressure is one of the external factors.

Therefore, any international action that makes the Iranians understand that they are aggressors and that they must abide by the laws of the age, avoid war, and agree to peace and noninterference in the affairs of Iraq and others, will be useful. Any such international pressure brought to bear on Iran is useful. It is on the basis of this realistic assessment that we view international action. We have never said that international action takes precedence over other factors. Top priority goes to the Iraqis, who are steadfast and fighting bravely and powerfully. It also goes to Arab support, which must be present and effective at all times. The world community of nations is also expected to exert pressure on Iran.

Without going into too much detail on the U.S. and Soviet stands, we say the Americans are Americans and the Soviets are Soviets. Both are superpowers; they view matters from the perspective of the international balance of power and also in light of their own national interests. We are encouraging these two superpowers and other states in the Security Council to adopt new stands against Iran as the side that rejects Resolution 598. One of the steps which they must take is to impose an arms embargo on Iran. However, we are not sure how serious this or that side is about adopting such a resolution, now or later. We are watching developments and encouraging the Americans and Soviets to adopt a stand.

Question: It would then be an international scandal if a country sells arms to the side that agrees to the embargo. I believe it would be a scandal and a violation of the international conference? [as published]

President: It would definitely be a scandal. But you know Iran now is like a marriageable girl who is being courted by suitors from the United States and the Soviet Union. Everyone wants her favor. Thus, we find that they commit many tactical errors because of a desire by each side to win Iran over at the expense of the other. These tactical errors are sometimes made at the expense of Iraq. Therefore the Arabs, and the Iraqis in particular, must be very cautious against any behavior that might look like an opportunistic action in international politics at Iraq's expense.

Question: Some GCC countries prefer conducting a dialogue with Iran to ease tension in the Gulf and to reach something that may make Iran agree to the UN Security Council resolution. But many questions are being raised about the usefulness of such a dialogue and meetings. Mr President, how do you assess such a dialogue and such meetings?

President: We know what our brothers in the Gulf think about this subject. Our brothers in in the Gulf have informed us in detail about their intentions. However, we still believe that the only course that will make the Iranians wake up and proceed on a path other than that of aggression and expansion is that the Arabs stand united against the Iranian aggression, and that they must make Iran understand that there can be no friendship unless it halts its aggression, accepts UN Security Council Resolution 598, and implements it with good intentions and in accordance with the sequence of its operative provisions, without any maneuvering. We respect the intentions of our brothers and we know that they do not seek to directly harm Iraq, at least in terms of the intentions of our brothers in the Gulf. We do not have the impression that any of them intends to harm Iraq in any way whatsoever.

Question: Mr President, dialogue must be encouraged so long as it will bring about an end to the aggression or a halt to the war?

President: I already said this is the intention of our brothers in the Gulf. We held a dialogue with them about this and believe that not one of them has bad intentions toward Iraq. However, we still believe that the soundest course is to make the Iranians understand that there is an Arab solidarity against the Iranian aggression.

Question: Mr President, there is another issue over which heated discussions are taking place: that of the U.S., Western, and Eastern presence in Gulf waters. Several conflicting viewpoints have been put forth on this presence, its usefulness, and its objectives. Mr President, how do you assess the situation in this respect?

President: As you know,the West and the East were present in the Gulf or near it. They recently intensified their presence there, particularly the Western presence, which has noticeably increased and led to the Soviet Union's intensifying its presence accordingly. This issue started when Iran continued to attack oil tankers and ships sailing through the Gulf to Arabian Gulf countries, continued to sink and hit several of these ships and oil tankers, and concentrated its attacks against Kuwait, because the Iranians believed that the best tactic is to deal with every Arab country alone and attack one country after the other. They believe that if they adopt such tactics they will be able to carry out their designs in stages.

Therefore, they focused their attention on Kuwait, seriously threatening all Kuwaiti vessels on a daily basis. You know that Kuwait has limited military capabilities, and the Arabs were not in a position to offer Kuwait means for warding off this aggression. That's why Kuwait addressed itself to international parties and asked the United States to protect its oil tankers and ships. At first, the United States refused to do so. Kuwait then turned to the USSR, which agreed to carry out such a role. When the United States learned this, it agreed to provide protection. They came to the Gulf to protect Kuwaiti ships. This led to an intensification of the U.S. and Western presence in the Gulf, which was countered by an increased Soviet presence. This means they came to the Gulf to protect navigation and not to halt the war. This applies to the United States, the Western countries, and the Soviet Union. They all came for the reasons we have already explained.

Question: In the president's opinion, will this presence continue for a long time, or....

President: I believe they will continue with the present strength and quality of buildup as long as it suits their interests and is in harmony with their thoughts and plans.

Question: How does President Saddam Husayn view the war, which has continued for 8 years, and also the Arab states' stand on this war? Does the president see an opportunity today for the Iranians to return to their senses, or are we to wait for a few more years? What is the president's view?

President: I said the Iranians will not return to their senses voluntarily. They will do so only when they fail in the war. In my objective opinion, the Iranians have already failed in the war, because their slogan is not the defense of Iran. On the other hand, our slogan is defending Iraq through steadfastness, and blocking Iran's evil slogan to overrun the Arab homeland and harm the Arab nation. Thus, when the Iranians fail to overrun Iraq, then we have fully achieved our slogan. On the other hand, the slogan of the Khomeyni regime is to build an empire, which Khomeyni says would be Islamic, but we know that it would be an Iranian empire under the leadership of Khomeyni and with Khomeyni's subversive thoughts, which have nothing to do with Islam. Therefore, they will return to the right course when they fail in the war.

As far as we are concerned, Iraq remains steadfast, God be praised. The Iraqi Army is strengthening day after day. Despite a population of only 16 million, Iraq has proved that it has a vast reserve of men, God be praised. Iraq continues to develop in all walks of life; in culture, art, military industrialization, and economic reconstruction. The Iraqi society is sound and balanced and the Iraqi national, pan-Arab and human identity is enlightened. So to us, the outcome is exactly as we anticipated right from the beginning. Iraq will remain steadfast and the aggression will be smashed on its international boundaries.

Question: But does not the president foresee an end?

President: Brother Ibrahim, one of the secrets of our ability to continue with this spirit is that we do not count the minutes, hours, days, and weeks. Perhaps God Almighty wanted to test us. Perhaps it is in the interest of the Arab nation and the Iraqis that this war was imposed on us by a party that is backward and harbors all the evils of man. So when we start counting the minutes, hours, days, weeks, and months, that would mean we are losing the war. On this basis, we will continue the reconstruction work and at same time ensure the requirements for confrontation. We work for peace, but also meet all the requirements of the war. We act in accordance with the saying: Work for your earthly world as if you will live forever and work for the hereafter as if you will die tomorrow.

Question: Let us move now to the Palestine question, being the Arab nation's second concern. In my opinion, the Arab nation's main concerns are the Gulf War and the Palestine question. Mr President, it is obvious that the Palestine question has, until recently, been overshadowed by the Gulf war and the Iranian threats to shipping in the Gulf. Then came the uprising, or to be more precise the revolution in the occupied territory, to expose Israel's true face to the world. Mr President, what in your opinion is the ideal course for joint Arab action in support of this uprising, so that such joint action would in the end turn world sympathy for the Palestinians into tangible political pressure in the interest of the Palestine question?

President: I agree with you that what is taking place in the occupied territory is a revolution by our Palestinian kinfolk against injustice, occupation, and tyranny. I also view this revolution not in terms of its immediate results, but in terms of its deep meaning and subsequent effects.

As I see it, this revolution will free the Western world from Zionist enslavement. The Zionists have actively worked to rally the Western world's support for them under the slogan humanitarian solidarity against Nazi crimes. The Zionists thus succeeded in enslaving the minds and thoughts of the Western world. They also controlled the Western world's media and other affairs for a long time. Under these circumstances and considerations the Western world, assisted by some in the Eastern bloc, committed their capital sin when they facilitated the state of aggression and expansion at the expense of the Palestinian Arab people.

This uprising, through which the people in the occupied territories express the noblest patriotic sentiments and their determination to confront persecution, has opened wide vistas of hope for the Arabs that liberation is possible, and that the basis for liberation does not depend on how many armies we mobilize and how many weapons we have but on the hope, determination, and optimism we harbor within our souls. Men, children, and women are now confronting the army of occupation. These young men and women have exhausted the army of occupation, an army whose might was once described in various ways.

We have seen on television how this army confronts the people in the occupied territories in a manner that falls short of military decorum. I foresee a great future for the uprising but not in terms of what may happen in the foreseeable future. We ask for hasty results or try to reap them before they come tc fruition. We must seriously consider any new positive political ideas that appear on the horizon as being made with good intentions for the attainment of serious, radical, and comprehensive solutions to our struggling Palestinian people's cause. The Arabs must support this line of action with their pens, funds, moves on the international level, and by distancing themselves from peripheral problem. All of this will be in support of the people in the occupied territories.

Question: Some time ago President Chadli Bendjedid called for an Arab summit that will discuss ways to support the uprising in the occupied territories. He also said that this summit must not discuss what is taking place there, but must issue specific resolutions. Mr President, do you believe the present circumstances are propitious for convening such a summit or that resolutions other than those you have mentioned can be adopted to support the uprising at the present time?

President: In any case, I believe that everyone must speak for himself. When Iraq says we must support the people in the occupied territories with pens, funds, and international moves, Iraq must put what it says into practice. When Algeria calls for such a thing, it also must translate it into facts. When Egypt also says this, it must carry out what it says within the limit of its own potential and cooperate with the Arabs within the broader potential. What we should do is act quickly within the limits of our potential. This potential is huge. Algeria's potential is huge.

This is also the case for Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Saudi Arabia, as well as for all of our Arab brothers. All of them have huge potentialities whether taken separately or collectively. I believe the first step on a sound course is to offer the support each party can offer separately before reaching an agreement on offering such support in a collective manner. The Arabs held a meeting at the foreign ministers level in the presence of PLO

Executive Committee Chairman Brother Yasir 'Arafat. They decided to form a committee to assist their Palestinian brothers in seeking out ideas and opinions for bolstering the activities of the people in the occupied territories. They also adopted a series of resolutions.

Therefore, before proceeding to a summit, we must first implement the resolutions adopted by the Arab League, which met at the foreign minister level. Thus, when we go to the Arab summit, we will be discussing support for the people in the occupied territories on a higher level. Nevertheless, any meeting at any Arab level for serving our people in the occupied territories will benefit the uprising when the circumstances for convening it come to fruition.

Question: Mr President, moving on to the political effects of the uprising, do you think the world atmosphere is now better prepared for the convocation of an international peace conference, although no real change has taken place in the concerned parties' declared stands?

President: On the level of the psychological atmosphere, the occupied territory's uprising is a great declaration to the entire world that the people in the occupied territory reject occupation and want to determine their destiny by their own will. Moreover, it is a great declaration to the world nations that these people are oppressed by Zionism, which one day said it was oppressed by Nazism. The world is demanded to salvage these people from injustice and occupation.

In my opinion, the uprising has created the psychological atmosphere on the level of nations and made these nations exert pressure on their rulers and administrations. Therefore, the recent U.S. move has many motives, but one reason is the American people's pressure as a result of the impact of the U.S. news media, what they convey about the occupied territory, and the effect this had on the U.S. Administration.

In this regard, we must warn our Palestinian brothers against rushing matters; the Zionists can now ambush any Palestinian activity in a manner that will distort the image of the Palestinians and raise questions about the behavior of the Palestinians rather than the Zionists who are oppressing the Palestinians. They must take into consideration the fact that any military action they carry out in the occupied territory or anywhere else may distort Palestinian policy. The killing of a Zionist now may be used by Zionists everywhere as a tendentious slogan to divert world attention from the Palestine question, the Palestinian people, and the Zionist persecution of the people of Palestine.

I have learned that some Arab radio stations blare out slogans that this or that Arab is a traitor in the occupied territory and should be killed. Such behavior may split the Palestinians in the occupied territory as was the case in 1939, for instance, when the Palestinians began to liquidate one another, thus giving the Zionists a better opportunity to implement their scheme. There are tribes in Palestine. When anyone from a certain tribe is killed the whole tribe rises against the Palestinian political organization. At this stage we as Arabs and Palestinians are all required to be cautious against a Zionist trap that makes the public concentrate on an act depicted as bad for the Arabs or Palestinians, while shifting attention away from the Zionists' oppression of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

Question: This is a very important point, Mr President. Your Excellency met with His Majesty King Husayn yesterday and today. Earlier, you described the recent Amman summit as a new starting point in joint Arab action. Now that 3 months have passed since the summit, is what you said at that time still valid?

President: I still believe that what happened at the Amman summit was a step forward in Arab thinking and a way of dealing with the various issues discussed at the Amman summit. I still believe that what was decided should be implemented by those who committed themselves to it. This is my assessment of what was issued by the Amman summit and what I see now and in the future regarding this subject.

Question: Mr President, as regards this same Arab summit and the joint Arab action, a question is posed on relations between Iraq on the one hand and Syria and Libya on the other, and also on their stand toward the Gulf war. Did your meeting with President al-Asad yield tangible results on the level of Iraqi-Syrian relations? I would like to know what really transpired at that meeting. Have the intentions proved to be honest? And have operative results emerged from this meeting?

President: Why do you want me to tire you and our Egyptian people with uncomfortable details? I believe that you or any Egyptian Arab can answer this question for me, since the answer that you or any Egyptian Arab may provide to the question would be similar to mine. The meeting took place at the urging of our brothers, despite the fact that I beleived at the time that this meeting would be futile. All people are fallible and only God is the one who makes no mistakes. To see rulers make mistakes is bearable and something that can be understood.

However, what Hafiz al-Asad did is not a mistake; it is something else. Hafiz al-Asad stood alongside Iran against Iraq; Iraq, under all circumstances and conditions, is an Arab state, while Iran is a non-Arab state. They say that Iran is an Islamic state. Let us presume that this is correct. Then, we are left with a fact stating that Iraq is also an Islamic state. Iraq is an Islamic and Arab state while Iran is only an Islamic one. Hence, if Iraq is an Islamic and Arab state which is the target of aggression by a foreign state, even if that state is an Islamic one, does it not become an Islamic and Arab

duty to see Muslims and Arabs stand alongside Iraq? If those ruling in Syria were Arabs and Muslims, they would be expected to stand alongside Iraq. Is this not correct?

Question: Yes, that is correct.

President: If the decision to support Iran against Iraq was made by a regime with a short lifetime of political practice and rule, we would say this is a mistake. Yes, it would be a big mistake. But then, we would be duty-bound to enlighten our brothers and inform them that it is an impermissible stand according to pan-Arab and principled criteria. However, this mistake was made by a regime that has been in power for more than 20 years. If this mistake was pursued for days or a few weeks, we would say this regime is incapable of distinguishing right from wrong. Pursuing anti-Iraqi policies for 8 years cannot be called a mistake. Despite all this, we met at the urging of our brothers.

We conveyed our concepts and heard the concepts that are well-known to you. Later, we agreed to adopt the stands that won Arab consensus at the summit. The Arabs agreed to adopt a unified stand toward the war, toward Iraq, and toward Iran. However, 1 day after the issuance of the summit resolutions, we were suprised by a statement made by the Syrian foreign minister: that they had not been apprised of the Amman summit resolutions and that they had not signed these resolutions. His statement also said that they attended the summit to prevent the hatching of a conspiracy against Iran, as he termed it. He added that if they had not attended, the summit would have turned into a U.S.-sponsored summit.

So, the process of shirking their obligations toward the implementation of the summit resolutions began 1 day after the issuance of these resolutions. In brief, this is everything that happened regarding the issue. I do not want to bother you or our Egyptian brothers with this issue any more.

Question: What about the mission of the new Libyan envoy?

President: The Libyan envoy came to discuss a number of issues with us. During the discussions, he affirmed that they are committed to the implementation of the Amman summit resolutions pertaining to the war.

Question: His Excellency President Mubarak has a well-known saying, which states that whenever a Libyan envoy arrives anywhere, his excellency the president issues instructions immediately following the envoys' meetings for all organizations to be on the alert, since Libya must be planning something. Does this saying apply to your way of thinking, Mr President?

President: I have heard this. Regrettably, past events made us believe this. However, we hope the future will not bolster this belief. If the future proves something contrary to this saying, and this is something that must be proven by the Libyans, then I am sure Brother President Mubarak will be the first man to voice happiness over this development.

Question: Let us now discuss Egyptian-Iraqi relations. Mr President, [RCC Vice Chairman] 'Izzat Ibrahim announced during his recent visit to Cairo that an agreement was reached to formulate a new strategy for military and economic relations between Iraq and Egypt. Mr President, can you outline for us your concept of the scope of cooperation between the two fraternal countries, and are there specific projects to bolster this cooperation in all fields?

President: You know how close our relations with Egypt are, whether in the political and practical aspect, the field of economy, or any other walk of life. We are prepared to proceed with cooperation in all walks of life, and without any restrictions, to realize the interests of the Egyptian and Iraqi peoples, and those of the Arab nation.

When the Iraqi RCC vice chairman visited Cairo, he did so to reaffirm that Iraq is prepared to cooperate in any of the fields which the brothers in Egypt believe would serve the people in Egypt, Iraq, and the Arab homeland. The RCC vice chairman found that Brother President Husni Mubarak and other Egyptian officials have a similar readiness. Therefore, the two countries are prepared to carry out cooperation in all walks of life. This does not mean that we will start such a cooperation now. We have aleady made large strides in this respect in all fields. What is required is the enhancement of this cooperation in terms of quantity and quality, to a degree that would serve the interests of Iraq and Egypt and the Arab nation.

Question: What do you have to say regarding the relationship that exists between Your Excellency and President Husni Mubarak?

President: The most important thing is that it is a relationship between brothers. We trust each other and speak frankly with each other without hiding anything. We act like this from the premise of our concern for the Arab nation's interests, even when our viewpoints differ on this or that issue. The basis is trust and brotherhood, and both do exist.

Question: Many Egyptians rightfully say you are the lawyer of the Arab communities in Iraq, particularly the Egyptian community. Do you have any comment on this?

President: If this is how my Arab and Egyptian brothers see it, then this is a great honor for me. By being so, I also protect myself, because I consider myself an Arab from

Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and any other Arab country. I am greatly honored to be the lawyer for any Arab in Iraq. However, I would like to affirm that there are many lawyers in Iraq who will protect the interests of any Arab citizen while he is in Iraq. All of our Iraqi people and the Iraqi leadership are such lawyers. This has become a policy and a way of life in Iraq.

Question: Mr President, you spent the most useful years of your life in Egypt. Many inhabitants in the Al-Duqqi quarter in Cairo still remember the young, militant Iraqi man who later assumed power in the fraternal country. What memories do you cherish about this period and when will you visit Cairo again?

President: The memories I cherish most are that my stay in Cairo gave me the opportunity to get to know this great Egyptian people, this good and patient people. This is the most important thing I remember and this has helped me remain in contact with my brothers in Egypt under all circumstances. As to when I will visit Cairo, I would like to affirm that Egypt and the Egyptian people are always in my heart. I see Egypt and deal with it even while I am in Baghdad or in any other place. I will visit Egypt when circumstances permit; that is, when the circumstances of the war permit me to be among my brothers in Egypt and to meet with my brother, the president, and with my other brothers and citizens of Egypt.

Question: Have I exhausted Your Excellency with my questions?

President: On the contrary, I am very happy.

Question: And now a few quick points. How do you view the cause of political democracy in the Arab homeland and Iraq, and the political role of pooling the people's resources for fighting, production, and achieving higher growth rates? What discipline do you set for a society on a war footing, so that it can support the battle front?

President: Generally, we cannot confine the cause of democracy to participation in the responsibility of drawing up policy or making decisions on the level of political parties. Democracy must be practiced by every citizen, in addition to those engaging in politics at the party level. As to how we have achieved public discipline under war circumstances, I can say that the discipline has resulted from conviction. The Iraqis began to observe discipline before the war, in accordance with a program to build a new Iraq. That program defined the role to be played by every individual within the collective tasks to make a better Iraq.

Therefore, when the war came, this program continued but with a higher degree of seriousness. As you know, for the war to achieve satisfactory results it needs not only a disciplined army but also disciplined people. This was our slogan, and, thank God, the Iraqis responded and discipline was achieved. The basis for this is the conviction in the program. When the results of this discipline become tangible and conspicuous, people become increasingly convinced of the soundness of the program and, consequently, discipline became even higher. We are very pleased with this.

Question: What is Iraq's view of the relationship between the public and the private sectors of the national economy? Is it true that Iraq plans to liquidate the public sector as some claim, especially after the selling of Iraqi Airways to a private company? Is this policy governed by circumstances, or is it a new trend to solve the problems of the Iraqi economy or public sector and encourage the private sector to work, invest, and be productive?

President: I first want to say something. Had the socialist sector and socialist activity not been in Iraq and in such strength, we would have been defeated in the war. Our conviction in the importance of socialist buildup has been increased rather than shaken by the experience of the war. But as you know, every beginning must have its mistakes, even if it has major advantages as set by the program. Such mistakes might exist in the plan or the practice. The flexible and sound mind, which leads life, should also respond to changes in life by modifications and changes. It is not because of the war that we reconsidered things that we believed merited reconsideration, but because of the law of development. Even if there had been no war, we would still have reconsidered those things.

For example, there are fields that the socialist sector had not entered all, or only to a minor degree, in the past. We have widened and increased this entry. We increased our investments and devoted more attention to areas such as heavy industry in general, including military industry. On the other hand, there are fields in which socialist activity had been involved but that we believe can be run by the private sector. In other words, some activities are compatible with the administrative and investment ability of the private sector, and at the same time fit the general program and do not upset it at the cost of the poor, for instance. Within this framework and these notions, we reconsidered some activities that we believe should be transferred to the private sector. We consolidated other activities that we believe and will continue to believe are essential for the socialist sector.

This is only the framework. Regarding the airlines, we had thought about establishing two airlines instead of keeping the airline as a government body. For example, the second airline company could be a mixed-sector body to create competition. However, the airline is still a socialist-sector body, and no change in it has occurred. Nevertheless, we have laid down a policy and told them that the airline must either make a profit or we will reconsider this issue. This is because our policy now is that the socialist sector should not lose, since it was not established to lose but to gain, so that the community will gain instead of having certain individuals in the society make profits. Such individuals take advantage of the capabilities of a large portion of the people.

The principle of a sound economy is for socialist activities to prosper. This means that the number of employees in the socialist bodies should be in line with their activities and not exceed these activities, there should be maximum utilization of their capabilities, and wartime should be genuinely taken advantage of according to our wartime standards. This does not mean that we should work only 6 or 8 hours, because we may work for 14 hours or for only 6 hours. In other words, the minimum time for work is 6 or 8 hours at state bodies, but the maximum time can be 14 or 12 hours as is actually taking place in some areas.

Question: Is there any new report or good news in the Iraq-Iran war, following the introduction of the Al-Husayn missile? Will such good news be delayed for a long time, or can it be learned now?

President: At any rate, you know that the production of a missile whose range is 650 km is not an individual capability in various areas of life, including the growing military industries' base in Iraq. This missile has a range of 650 km, but yesterday my brothers in the military industries told me that according to their theoretical calculations they increased its range to 850 km. They will test these theoretical calculations by conducting an experimental launch, the outcome of which we are awaiting.

Question: This is very great news. We hope it will be an exclusive and not broadcast before this interview is published.

President: We will not say anything, since this is an exclusive for you, and afterward your brothers in the news media will make it public.

Question: Mr President, in conclusion, I can only extend profound thanks to you, first because of the time you granted to us—and we realize the seriousness of the time factor under such crucial circumstances—and second because you frankly expressed your views on all issues of interest to the Arab world. Praise be to God, we can say we are more reassured about Iraq.

President: Be fully reassured. Be reassured about your army in Iraq, about your people in Iraq, and about matters here.

Question: Thank you, Mr President, for everything.

President: You are welcome. Convey my greetings to Brother President Mubarak, to all my brother officials, to the Egyptian people, and to all Egyptian citizens in the countryside and in the cities.

Question: Your greetings will be conveyed through this publication, God willing.

President: You are welcome. Let us take a picture together. You are welcome.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

33d Missile Strike Noted

JN202046 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 2026 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 20 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. We have been telling the tyrannical and criminal Iranian rulers not to commit aggression against Iraq and not to attack its cities. We told them: You will be the losers, and you will receive unprecedented, violent Iraqi strikes that you cannot withstand. We have said that and they have heard it, but they preferred to resort to the evil grudge and conspiracy in the interests of Zionism and its goals in the region, instead of pursuing God's path and the Iranian people's interests. Today, the Al-Husayn missiles are talking for us, and will force those who refrain from hearing the truth to hear, and will make the dying mule face its miserable end. With God's help, the 33d missile strike with the Al-Husayn missiles was launched at the city of Tehran at 2300 [2000 GMT] today. Glory to you, O Iraqis. Carry out more destructive strikes at your enemy. God be with you.

[Dated] 20 March 1988

34th Strike Reported

JN211330 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1257 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 21 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Iraq's fire is today shaking historial sensitivities and the racist anti-Arab spirit which began the aggression and tried to find a loophole in Iraq's solid wall, but was shamefully defeated. Today the people, who under the banner of their beloved leader waged the glorious battle of Saddam's Al-Qadisiyah, the battle of defending Iraqi territory and people, are more capable than ever before of crushing the empty heads and tearing them apart in the quagmire of defeat. With God's help, we continue to deal devastating blows to the criminal Iranian rulers.

With God's assistance, the 34th blow with Al-Husayn missiles was dealt to the city of Tehran at 1530 [1230 GMT] today. Praise be to God for His victory. May God grant us further victories.

[Dated] 21 March 1988

Ben-Aharon: Syrian Warning 'Mere Posturing'

TA220550 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Yosi Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, says statements by Syrian officials regarding possible Israeli actions against missiles amount to not much more than mere posturing. Yesterday a Syrian official told reporters: Any attack against Saudi Arabia would be viewed as an attack against the Syrians. In New York, Ben-Aharon had this to say:

[Begin recording] Well, we wish we were not engaged in any slinging match of words and threats. I think Syria also realizes that escalation of any type would be bad for Syria and the Syrian people, and for Israel and the Jewish people, and if Syria is once to solve its problems, the one way to do it is to negotiate with us. We have offered negotiations even with Syria that has a reputation of being a hard-line extreme country that does not want to recognize Israel, negotiate with it, or make any kind of peace with it. [end recording]

Ben-Aharon later told reporter Jonathan Schachter that he hopes measures would be taken by the United States to bring about a de-escalation of the arms race in the Middle East. But he repeated that Israel would not stand by idly if the Saudi missiles proved to be a threat.

[Begin recording] We have a record that we do not wait for a potential threat to become a real threat, and this we have done in the past. Of course, we will not sit by if we are faced with any kind of threat to our security and our existence. [end recording]

Press Views Saudi Missiles

TA210839 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 21 Mar 88

[From the review of morning press editorials]

[Text] HA'ARETZ says the prime minister's appeal to the U.S. secretary of defense to take every possible measure for the removal of Saudi Arabia's Chinese missiles from the region is appropriate, while the remarks made by the director general of the Prime Minister's Office on this issue cannot be interpreted in any way other than as a threat leveled at Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is still considered a relatively moderate state, not only by the Americans but by us as well. It is true that every army headquarters in the world makes plans for any contingency, but this does not mean that Yosi Ben-Aharon should flaunt our military prowess.

DAVAR writes that the ease with which Mr Shamir rushed to issue the thinly veiled threat to destroy the Chinese missiles purchased by Saudi Arabia is amazing. One should hope that clearer heads in the cabinet and their advisers in the IDF will cool this ardor and neutralize the Saudi peril using better judgment.

Daily on Military Significance

TA211241 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Mar 88 p 1

[Article by military commentator Ze'ev Schiff: "Another Arab Country Will Be Able To Fight Israel Without Sending Troops to the Battlefront"]

[Excerpts] The military significance of the Saudi-Chinese missile deal is that another Arab country has thus acquired the capability to intervene in a war with Israel, particularly against populated areas, without sending troops to the battlefront. Even before the Saudi-Chinese deal, several Arab countries, including Syria and Iraq, had the capability to "cover" most of Israel's territory with their missiles. The Saudi-Chinese deal should be seen as yet another step in the Middle East's transformation into an arsenal of medium-range missiles. Until the deal is executed and the missiles become operational, Israel should pay attention to Iraq's growing capability to fire missiles—still carrying relatively small warheads—quite a considerable distance. Particularly because of their low accuracy, such missiles cannot win a war, as evident in the Persian Gulf, but they can be used to terrorize the population, especially if they carry chemical warheads.

Israel will not be able to prevent such a process. It is therefore unlikely that the threat of Israel taking action against the Saudi deal made by Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, really has a leg to stand on. Obviously, action can be taken against certain targets in Saudi Arabia or any other country, but this would not at all be like hitting a single target, such as a nuclear reactor. [passage omitted]

The Saudi-Chinese deal involves the delivery of an unknown number of CSS-2 missiles with an estimated range of 3,000 km. It will probably take some time before the deal is carried out, and Saudi Arabia will probably need Chinese experts to position the missiles and make them operational. In the Chinese arsenal, these missiles are considered strategic weapons. They carry nuclear warheads, and they made their debut in the early 1970's. Equipping such missiles with normal warheads is considered "wasteful," but Saudi Arabia can afford it. The deal was most probably sparked off by the Iranian threat, but it should be noted that the negotiations between the two countries started as far back as 1985, and that Riyadh will not abstain from using these missiles on another battlefront, such as against Israel, if it sees fit. [passage omitted]

Avi Pazner Interviewed on Shamir-Reagan Talks

TA191100 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0905 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Telephone interview with Avi Pazner, the prime minister's media adviser, by Yosi 'Abadi and Dani Vessely—live]

[Text] [Vessely] Mr Pazner, how does the prime minister interpret President Reagan's statement that he who says no to the Shultz plan will be held accountable to his people?

[Pazner] Look, Reagan's statement was qualified. Reagan pointed out that the Israeli prime minister did not say no. That statement should be interpreted as a general remark aimed not only at Israel—perhaps it was directed mostly at other countries and other elements.

[Vessely] But other leaders in our region do not have to account to their people, so this statement was directed to Mr Shamir.

[Pazner] It was directed to all sides. I have the impression, however, that in Israel this statement was blown out of proportion. In the U.S. media it is hardly being mentioned at all. The entire Middle East issue is hardly being mentioned here at present, certainly not Reagan's statement. Here in the United States it was not interpreted as a warning to Israel, or as a rift. The reports were matter-of-fact—the media reported the talks between the prime minister and Reagan and Shultz, that there are differences of opinion regarding the international conference issue, that there are many other areas in which there is agreement between the United States and Israel, and that all the talks were conducted in a friendly atmosphere.

['Abadi] Considering President Reagan's statement, it is still unclear what answer Shamir gave regarding the Shultz plan.

[Pazner] Look, the prime minister was not authorized to give an answer. Prior to his departure he promised to brief the government and the Inner Cabinet about his talks in the United States, and that a discussion will then be held and a decision made. I still do not know what decision will be made. In any event, the United States has not received a concrete answer yet. The prime minister continued to present his position here and asked for clarifications from the U.S. side. After his return to Israel he will bring this up for discussion and a decision.

['Abadi] I want to ask another question regarding Reagan's statement. Reagan indeed said Shamir did not say no, but how do you interpret Reagan's remarks in light of what Shamir said prior to his departure, that the only thing he accepts in the Shultz plan is Shultz' signature?

[Pazner] Look, I do not want to deal with everything that is being published. During his visit to the United States, the prime minister did not make these remarks in any of his talks with the administration. He especially stressed his reservations about the international conference idea. I think he concentrated all his efforts on convincing his U.S. interlocutors—who until several weeks ago were the ones with the strongest reservations about the idea of the international conference—to return to their previous position and to support direct talks between Israel and the Arab states.

['Abadi] Was he successful in this?

[Pazner] He had very serious and friendly talks both with Shultz and Reagan. It is possible that the seeds sown there will bear fruit in the future.

[Vessely] According to what the Israeli entourage knows at present, has the Shultz plan been changed?

[Pazner] Up to now it has not been changed. This does not mean it cannot change in future.

['Abadi] Do the Americans expect Israel to make a very quick decision on the initiative, or did you get the impression they were in no hurry?

[Pazner] I want to tell you something: It is somewhat difficult for me to describe the atmosphere in the United States, where at present the Middle East issue is completely off the agenda. Lately they have been talking about completely different issues, for example, Honduras and Nicaragua, North and Poindexter, and so forth. The Middle East is not even mentioned, and there is no sense of urgency in the United States.

[Vessely] Does this mean that Shultz neither intends to pursue his plan, nor come to Israel soon, nor apply pressure for an Israeli answer?

[Pazner] I did not say that. All I said was that at present it does not look as though this is a top priority issue; this explains why we were not required to provide a clear answer within a specified time. You know that there is a crisis now in Latin America, an area extremely close to the United States. How many issues can the administration seriously deal with simultaneously? There is a saying that Washington is a city of one crisis at a time; it is hard for the U.S. Administration to deal with several crises simultaneously. At present they have extremely serious problems in Latin America, including a U.S. Army force that has been sent to Honduras. This has completely overshadowed all other issues here.

[Vessely] So the prime minister has received the impression that there is no urgency and that more time is available due to the change in the administration's priorities?

[Pazner] I did not say that. You asked me whether they are pressuring us into giving a quick answer. I told you that they are not, and I also explained to you the background in Washington. The prime minister said that upon his return to Israel he will submit Shultz' entire plan for discussion in the government and the Inner Cabinet for a possible decision there.

['Abadi] Is he expecting any changes in the Shultz initiative prior to the decision in the Inner Cabinet?

[Pazner] Look, he is still in the United States and there are ongoing contacts with the U.S. Administration. Until he returns to Israel and until he learns where things are standing not only in the United States...[changes thought] Shevardnadze is expected to visit Washington next week; there is still no answer from Husayn and from other Arab elements, so why should Israel be the first to give an official answer?

Arens Views Talks, Elections

TA191229 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Interview with Knesset Member Moshe Arens by David Essing, upon Arens' return from Washington on 18 March; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Arens] We have had differences of opinion in the past. We surely will have differences of opinion in the future as well. It is not possible even for the best of friends to always be in total agreement. Our prime minister left after his talks in Washington with relations in excellent shape, both on the government level, and his personal relationships with the secretary of state, George Shultz, and with the President. I attended the last meeting we had, the breakfast meeting yesterday in the State Department with Secretary Shultz, and I must tell you the atmosphere at that meeting could not have been better. Secretary Shultz expressed his understanding for the position and for the concerns our prime minister voiced, and that does not mean we agree on certain issues. Clearly there is not agreement.

[Essing] But at the same time, President Reagan told Prime Minister Shamir publicly that the Shultz initiative is a reasonable and practical proposal, and that in effect, if the prime minister does not accept it, he will have to answer to his people. Is this not really a veiled threat to Mr Shamir?

[Arens] No, it is not a veiled threat at all, and I am surprised that people are trying to read things into what has been said that simply are not there. That the President says this is a good and useful proposal should not surprise anybody. He would have to say that. This is the proposal of his secretary of state, and he is not about to say that this is not a good proposal. Really, he supports the proposal and would like to see it accepted. Secondly, since it is a proposal that was formulated after the secretary of state's visit to the area, it is one that takes into consideration the positions taken by leaders of the Arab countries.

Maybe from our point of view there is too much consideration given to the position of the leaders of Arab countries, positions of the Soviet Union. And, there is concern, I am sure, in the administration in Washington, that if the proposal is changed, that whatever agreement they think they may get from the Arab capitals and from the Soviet Union may not be there. So, there is hesitancy about making any changes. But we are a partner to this, and I do not doubt that the Government of the United States will very seriously consider the reservations, the very strong reservations, that were voiced by Prime Minister Shamir.

[Essing] You were in on those meetings with American leaders. What is going to happen now?

[Arens] I think that probably the administration, Secretary Shultz in particular, would like to assess the situation. He told us that he has a meeting with the Soviet foreign minister, Shevardnadze, next week. He is coming to Washington. I suppose that he may be awaiting the results of those discussions. I suppose he is waiting to hear what the Israeli Cabinet will say after they get the reports from the prime minister, and then, I think, he will decide what to do next.

[Essing] Here at home, Labor officials have been saying that now is the time for early elections. Prime Minister Shamir has not accepted the Shultz proposal, and that in effect, your party, the Likud, is stalling because it does not want to go to the people to hear their answer.

[Arens] I am sorry to say that this strikes me as almost ridiculous. Israel is a democratic country. I am surprised with what ease we sometimes hear people attacking the most cherished values of our country, namely democracy. We have elections, we will continue to have elections. There may be people in the Labor Party who considered the possibility of not holding elections, but there is certainly nobody in the Likud does. The elections are scheduled not 3 years from now, not 2 years from now, and not 1 year from now. I think elections are scheduled for 7 months from now, and since we are not in a position, like Britain, to go to the elections on 2 or 3 weeks' notice, you might present with some logic the need to go to the people right now. But based on our past experience, elections take place 3, 4, 5, sometimes 6 months from the day the decision is reached to advance them. Actually, there would be no significant difference between the elections as scheduled, on the 1st of November, and the elections that you might hold even if you decided to advance them. Therefore, in my view, it makes no sense.

[Essing] But what is going to happen now? Your party, the Likud, is split with Labor, almost 50-50 down the line. How can a government operate under the conditions that exist in the territories where it is almost tongue-tied, and still carry out any kind of viable policy?

[Arens] Now, that is an excellent question, and I think it deserves a good answer. I think that if Mr Peres were, as of tomorrow, to accept the authority of the prime minister as he should, as I think he is obligated to do, then you would see that this government will function, and function effectively until elections.

[Essing] There are some leading Jewish intellectuals, Isaiah Berlin, Isaac Stern and others, who have signed a petition calling on Prime Minister Shamir to adopt the Shultz initiative. This kind of split in the Jewish world is apparently going to be with us for some time.

[Arens] I have not seen that petition, but I have met with many members of the Jewish community in the United States, many leaders of the Jewish community in the United States, just about every Jewish senator and Jewish member of the House of Representatives, and I had a very clear feeling that certainly during the last week or two we see a very strong trend in the American Jewish community to unite behind Israel, to unite behind the Israeli Government, to unite behind the positions of the prime minister of Israel.

AL-NAHAR Discusses U.S. Visit

TA181621 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
16 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Our Faith in the Justice of Our Cause Is Stronger Than the Challenges"]

[Text] The visit by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir to Washington is taking place at a time when the Palestinian people's uprising in the occupied territories is escalating and the Arab-Israeli conflict is appearing in its true form. At a time when the Palestinian people are demanding to achieve their legitimate rights on the soil of their homeland and establish a just and lasting peace in the region, Shamir's rejection of the principle of exchanging "land for peace," rejection of the international conference, and even rejection of Shultz' proposals are becoming manifest.

Despite these intransigent positions, Shamir went to Washington, fearing neither the possibility that U.S. pressure will be exerted on him, nor that a confrontation might take place between him and the U.S. Administration.

Perhaps what is ironic is the lavish reception accorded to Shamir despite all we had heard about the change in U.S. public opinion and its rejection of the occupation practices in the territories.

We do not know what the outcome of Shamir's visit will be. As to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, they long ago lost faith in the U.S. role, with its bias toward Israel and its remoteness from the values and principles advocated by the American people.

We are confident that what moved Washington, Tel Aviv, and other capitals was the uprising of the Palestinian people, who have faith in the justice of their cause and in their right to their land, regardless of wavering by Washington to exert pressure on its ally, Israel.

This sad reality will not prevent the Palestinian people from moving forward to achieve their goals and aspirations. We have never wagered either on the success of the Shultz plan or on curbing the intransigence and rigidity of Shamir and his Likud Party. We continue to believe that the Palestinian cause, with its pan-Arab depth, will find the right answer to this challenge.

The Arab nation, represented by the confrontation states, is required to draw up a formula by which a transformation can be effected in the U.S. and Israeli positions.

As long as the world does not feel the power and persistence of the Arab nation, and as long as the confrontation does not emerge in its pan-Arab dimension, we will not be able to achieve our legitimate demands.

DAVAR Commentary on U.S. 'Schizophrenia'

TA201345 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew
20 Mar 88 p 7

[Commentary by Hagay Eshed: "American Schizophrenia"]

[Text] Heaven knows what these Americans want from us and from themselves. On the one hand, there is no doubt they want to promote the peace process between us and our neighbors and, consequently, to create the climate conducive to peace in Israel's public opinion and among the various right-wing circles that support the nay-saying Likud. On the other hand, they lend a hand to all sorts of inflammatory Palestinian provocations that stoke the hatred between Jews and Arabs, and that certainly does not help promote the peace process or create the right atmosphere. They thus play into the hands of those who yearn for the failure of the Shultz plan, both on the Arab and Jewish sides.

This is the result of the Americans' decision to take Dr Mubarak 'Awwad, purportedly the director of the Palestine Center for Nonviolence, under their wing. Can one call what is happening in the territories "nonviolence?" Does nonviolence mean hurling stones, Molotov cocktails, metal spikes, and other no less lethal weapons at soldiers and civilian cars? Do the Americans welcome the resignation of Arab policemen in the territories? Is that also a chapter in 'Awwad's nonviolence theory? After all, this nonviolence creates a hotbed for an increase in criminal violence in the territories among the Arabs themselves.

If 'Awwad objected to all of this and tried to counter it by proposing to the Palestinians that they adopt "nonviolent" methods, there is no doubt that he has suffered a devastating defeat. Either that, or from the beginning all the talk about "nonviolence" was merely another form of camouflage and a ploy of the various PLO factions. Whether he intended it or not, Dr 'Awwad's activities added fuel to the conflagration in the territories. It stoked the fire of hatred between Jews and Arabs, especially given the fact that a few Jews support him and his activities or at least supported them in the past.

Any U.S. interference on his behalf undermines Israel's rule in the territories and in Jerusalem and increases mistrust of the United States as an honest broker who should know who it is dealing with, particularly when it comes to those right-wing Israeli circles the administration is so eagerly trying to court. Heaven knows what the Americans are getting us and themselves into. One hand is trying to promote peace and the other is trying to thwart it; they are pulling the rug from under their own feet. After all, the uprising in the territories has so far managed only to change the policy of the United States.

President Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz suddenly realized they had been wrong in favoring a continuation of the status quo in the territories and now they realize a change is inevitable. Before the uprising the Likud did not believe a change in the status quo was needed, and it still remains unconvinced. The IDF has no other choice but to quell the uprising, even if it does not know how to go about it and despite the fact that foreign television networks portray IDF soldiers as ruthless murderers only because they beat up rather than kill their assailants.

Were there any State Department officials interested in such a deterioration of the situation? Did they not realize that Dr Mubarak 'Awwad was one of the men who had brought about the uprising in the territories through the idea of nonviolence, which the local population has so far taken to mean "cold violence?" Maybe those Americans protecting him, particularly in the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem and through its recommendation, were interested in such an uprising in order to persuade their superiors in Washington?

Such working methods, of local levels pitted against their superiors at headquarters, have many historical precedents. Whether this is the case with Dr 'Awwad or not, the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem has a long record of engaging in anti-Israeli provocations in the territories, at least if one is to judge by the results of its actions, even if they were not intentional. This may be the doing of consuls and clerks who take independent action with the blessing of a few State Department officials, heaven knows what goes in Washington's labyrinthine corridors of power. Whatever the case may be, the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem is not working to promote peace but to promote the goals of the Palestinians. Never mind if this comes at the expense of the state of Israel and U.S.-Israeli friendship. It is as if this consulate represented another America—a kind of American schizophrenia.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, who is also the acting interior minister, gave in to U.S. pressure in 'Awwad's case. At the Americans' request, Shamir has been putting off his deportation. Consequently, 'Awwad can take part in the agitation in the territories. Actually, the uprising has already managed to do away with the unification of Jerusalem, a goal supported by the Americans in addition to the question of sovereignty, which still remains open. Jerusalem has actually gone back to being a divided city, and this has had a particularly serious effect on its Arab inhabitants who are the victims of the intimidation and threat campaign of the rebellious Al-Shabibah youth movement. They may thank Dr Mubarak 'Awwad and the U.S. Consulate protecting him for it. And this is not the end of the story yet.

The U.S. Consulate will continue to be a thorn in the flesh of united Jerusalem, if it ever becomes united again in spite of the misdeeds of this consulate. Please try to remember: the problem of Jerusalem is the toughest obstacle on the way to a peace agreement in the future.

Here is yet another piece of evidence of the American schizophrenia: According to Shultz' plan, which was publicly welcomed by President Reagan, negotiations on the final settlement must begin in December of this year. These negotiations will obviously include the problem of Jerusalem and the desire to arrive at a mutually-acceptable agreement on its future as one united city. Will the U.S. Consulate help promote this goal? Will Dr 'Awwad's ongoing activities in the city help achieve this goal? Or perhaps the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem has a goal and policy different than that of the "Shultz plan." Heaven knows who we are dealing with. Heaven knows why one American hand is trying to bring about the success of the Shultz plan while the other is trying to prevent peace from being restored in the territories and the creation of the atmosphere conducive to it.

Reagan's Motives Analyzed

TA181834 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 17 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Condolences to the American People and Apology to the Optimists"]

[Text] Prior to Yitzhaq Shamir's arrival in Washington, many people expected that the U.S. President would try to convince the Israeli prime minister of the need to accept the U.S. initiative, and would urge him to deal with the political realities in the region for the sake of achieving a just peace for all the region's nations and states, including Israel itself.

Others expected that the U.S. President would use his influence with the prime minister of a country that lives at the expense of the American taxpayers in order to put an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

All the expectations, however, collapsed. Instead of playing the role of a leader of a superpower, the U.S. President again flattered the Israeli Prime Minister and repeated what the latter says about Palestinians and the PLO.

Did Reagan realize that what he said 2 days ago will increase Yitzhaq Shamir's intransigence, undermine the voices of peace in Israel, and arouse further doubts about U.S. credibility in Palestinian circles and in the Arab world?

Why does Reagan flatter Yitzhaq Shamir? Is he doing it in order to gain Jewish votes? Reagan flatters Shamir because he is a weak president who does not know what he is talking about. Reagan will not lose anything if he decides to back right, peace, and justice because his days in the White House are numbered. Ronald Reagan is sinking, however, into the abyss of history and is ignoring the principles of right, peace, and justice.

Ronald Reagan will join Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Jimmy Carter, who after leaving the White House began to talk about Israel's role in obstructing the peace efforts and in refusing to respond positively to the proposed peace initiatives. What a pity, because the one who failed the test is not one more U.S. president but all the principles and values advocated by great American presidents. Too bad there are no longer any leaders in America who deserve the title of leader, and apologies to those who believe the United states is serious about making peace in the Middle East.

Closing of Jordan River Bridges Contemplated
TA220946 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 22 Mar 88 pp 1, 4

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari and ITIM]

[Excerpt] Israel is contemplating closing the Jordan River bridges. Observers believe that drastic measures are planned in a bid to unsettle the local population, because Israel will not be able to tolerate a prolonged uprising. This assessment is also based on the pressure being exerted by the rightist parties for steps to be taken in this direction. Although such a decision may not be made immediately, it is nevertheless topical.

Our correspondent notes that measures to curtail free movement along the bridges and increase bureaucratic obstacles have already been imposed. They affect both those wishing to cross the bridges and people who want to transfer monies into Israel.

Israel has recently closed the Sinai border crossings to residents of the Gaza Strip. This is apparently a precursor to the parallel closure of the Jordan River bridges, should such a decision be made. Another possibility is that the trucks transporting agricultural produce to the East Bank will no longer enjoy freedom of movement. Such a measure was overruled last year when it was discovered that it would have a serious effect on West Bank agricultural exports. Collective punishment of inhabitants of the territories has recently been expanded. Thus, vast areas were closed off and telephone and electricity lines were severed. [passage omitted]

Shamir on Consensus Not To Return to '67 Border
TA191152 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Prime Minister Shamir has defended his policy of not withdrawing from the territories by saying that Israel's pre-1967 borders were suicidal. Speaking to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, an influential study group, Shamir said Judaea and Samaria are within rifle range of pedestrians in the streets of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. The prime minister said this was why there was a consensus in Israel never to return to the armistice lines of 1967.

Rabin Comments on Arabs, Firing Restrictions
TA211333 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that for 40 years the Israeli Arabs have borne their commitment to the state of Israel honorably. We understand their attitude to the fate of their people in the territories, but we have never categorized the Israeli Arabs' nationality. There have been some outbursts of violence recently, the defense minister said, and we should make this phenomenon disappear. The majority of Israeli Arabs have no connection with violence, the minister added. He was addressing Giv'atayim students, and our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports on his remarks:

[Begin recording] [Rabin] There were more Jewish spies than spies for the Israeli Arabs. I understand their feelings, their caring for the fate of their people in the territories. We have never defined the nationality or citizenship of the Israeli Arabs as Jewish. Their identity cards bear their proper nationality: Arab. They are sensitive on this matter. The line they shouldn't cross, however, is that of violence. It is true that recently there have been outbursts of violence, and we should take care of these.

[Menashe] I still believe, Minister Rabin adds, that most Israeli Arabs are not involved in violent acts, and we should see to it that the limited manifestations of violence disappear. Minister Rabin made it clear to the high school students: The IDF has established norms and values for itself.

[Rabin] At one point IDF commanders asked me to restrict permission to shoot at Molotov cocktail throwers. There was no political decision to impose the restriction; it was a recommendation made by IDF commanders, at a time when firebombs were hurled by participants in mass demonstrations. The recommendation was prompted by their wish to prevent random shooting into a crowd after a Molotov cocktail had been thrown. No politicians restricted the firing regulations in the wake of a firebomb incident; it was an initiative by IDF commanders. The situation has now changed. There are no mass demonstrations anymore, and most firebombs are thrown at lone vehicles on traffic routes. Therefore, that order which had never been abolished, merely suspended, was brought back into use. Again, this was done on the IDF commanders' initiative.

[Menashe] On the murder of the reservist in Bethlehem, Minister Rabin stressed his belief that this does not mark a new stage. If the confrontation settles on terrorism we will have to deal with it with the utmost gravity, and the local population will suffer.

[Rabin] Unfortunately, we have rich experience in dealing with terrorism; we always knew how to deal with it and we still do. Indeed, we will be obliged to deal simultaneously with civilian violence on the one hand and with terrorist elements on the other. [end recording]

Arabs Insist on Conference, Israeli Withdrawal

TA211606 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 18 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "The Exposed Game"]

[Text] At his news conference in Washington, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir persisted in his implicit rejection of the Shultz plan. He adamantly ruled out the principle of land for peace, and insisted that the Israelis want everything in exchange for nothing.

This worn-out rejection by Shamir was not a surprise to us here in the occupied territories, but what concerns us is what the Americans and Israelis are concocting, namely, deluding the Arabs and the Palestinians that the Shultz initiative is in the Arabs' interests. The initiative would thus receive Arab endorsement as a "historic opportunity."

If this assumption is the U.S.-Israeli goal, then they are mistaken. Moreover, the Arabs are not so naive. The Arabs dealt with the Rogers initiative of 1970 and the Reagan initiative of 1982, and it was proven to everyone that the Arabs of today are not the Arabs of yesterday. The best proof of this is that the Reagan initiative produced the Arab Fes peace plan which caused embarrassment for Washington and Tel Aviv.

The Arabs today insist on an international peace conference attended by the five superpowers and all the parties, including the PLO. They also insist on Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories and implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular affirm that there will be no solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict until the Palestinians achieve their legitimate rights.

Perhaps Washington is aware—whether Shamir accepts or rejects the Shultz initiative—that we know what we want as well as the basis by which a just and comprehensive peace may be achieved.

Therefore, let the kitchens in Washington and Tel Aviv cook whatever they desire, but we Palestinians, backed by the Arab nation, will remain firmly steadfast, persisting in our position with resolve and perseverance.

PLO Willing To Negotiate

TA211147 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 21 Mar 88 p 4

[Report by political correspondent Mikhal Yudelman]

[Text] The PLO, Syria and other Arab countries are willing to negotiate with Israel within the framework of an international conference, but Israel is not willing to negotiate with the PLO, Rakah Secretary-General MK [Knesset Member] Me'ir Wilner, said yesterday. Wilner returned from Moscow last week.

Speaking at a press conference at Beit Sokolov, Wilner said that during his visit to the Soviet Union, the PLO's political bureau head Faruq Qaddumi, the Syrian foreign minister and other Arab statesmen had met Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. They issued a joint statement that the international conference must strive for a stable, lasting, comprehensive peace in the Middle East, based on the balance of interests of those involved in the dispute.

Wilner also said that the Soviets intended to amend the emigration law, to eliminate red tape and simplify emigration procedures, to enable anyone who wants to leave the Soviet Union to do so without difficulty.

U.S. Gives Blessing to 'War' on Unrest

TA211457 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 21 Mar 88 p 7

[Commentary by Pinhas 'Inbari: "Uncle Sam Supports and Approves"]

[Text] When members of the settlers lobby emerged satisfied from a meeting in the Knesset with Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin last week, one should already have suspected that a new alliance between Rabin and the settlers was being formed. It is now clear that Rabin disclosed to them the harsh steps to be taken in the territories, such as changing the orders on opening fire as the settlers had been demanding, outlawing the Al-Shabibah youth movement, and others.

The fact that Rabin had to delay the publication and enforcement of these measures up to now shows they first had to be reported to the United States, as indeed happened. It is now clear beyond a doubt: Israel has declared war in the territories and, like all other wars in the past, it had to be coordinated with the United States. It is now clear that this was one of the main issues Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir took up with the U.S. Administration. The "go-ahead" given to this new Israeli policy shows that the Americans have given it their blessing.

Who is interested in a war in the territories? Shamir is, at least in the short run, in order to obtain a delay in answering U.S. Secretary of State Shultz. It is reasonable to assume that one of Shamir's arguments for not rushing ahead with the Shultz initiative was that given the

present difficult situation in the territories, Israel would be starting any political process from a position of weakness. To back his position, Shamir could have cited the words of the famous former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who called on Israel to crush the Palestinian uprising in the territories with an iron fist, before anything else. The Israeli lobby in Washington probably influenced conservative Republican Party figures to justify Israel to Reagan and Shultz.

Gush Emunim also has long-term reasons to want to declare a state of war. Those reasons are what they call in their publications "the 1948 conditions," or creating the conditions for expelling the Arabs from Judaea and Samaria. Yitzhaq Rabin, the defense minister for the Alignment, was the first to define the situation in the territories as a state of war, not only for reasons connected with the way he intended to quell the Palestinian uprising (meaning the iron fist that a state of war requires), but also for weighty strategic reasons.

Rabin's school of thought views the political heritage of Moshe Dayan, defense minister after the 6-Day War, as the root of all evil responsible for the deterioration in the territories. Dayan attempted to establish democratic ways of operation in the territories. He opened the Jordan River bridges to the east and the Green Line to the west, as a basis for a solution of the Palestinian problem within a confederative form in a Greater Israel. Abolishing Dayan's heritage requires a "state of war." It is no accident that the iron fist policy is being accompanied by a gradual reduction of traffic across the Jordan River bridges and a partial closure of the Green Line, for example, by keeping the media out of the territories.

The only one who has not joined the "state of war" choir is Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, who is sadly watching his political concepts collapse without being able to help.

Oddly enough, the Shamir-Rabin-settlers coalition has secret allies on the Palestinian side. The internal debates of the Palestinians show the gradual emergence of a radical force that wishes to Lebanonize the territories. The latter are interested in a violent struggle with firearms, while others are trying to prevent a deterioration toward an armed struggle and to retain the present character of the uprising, one that is basically popular and unarmed. The radical camp is based upon an alliance between the Islamic Jihad, whose name states its aims, and the radical Palestinian left wing, which aspires to an armed struggle as the only suitable war against Israel.

Despite this radical union—which, by the way, reflects the Middle East coalition between Libya, Syria, and Iran—there is a pragmatic coalition composed of the PLO and the communists. Meanwhile, the deep differences between them have held up publication of Pamphlet No 11 after the differences over Pamphlets 8, 9, and 10 caused internal turmoil. The settlers are therefore waiting for the radical group to hand them an excuse, just as Abu Nidal gave Sharon an excuse with the attempted assassination of Ambassador Argov in London to start the war in Lebanon. The more the PLO and the communists succeed in putting off this deteriorating situation, the time in which a solution of the imbroglio can be found will lengthen.

The defense minister must be given credit here: He supports Gush Emunim up to a certain point and not beyond. It is hard to believe that he would support the transfer idea. His cooperation with Gush Emunim is based on a contrasting idea: to create a crisis that will demand a search for a solution. He believes in the Allon Plan.

And what about Shamir—what is the limit to which he would be prepared to go? Shamir's limits are again becoming clear from the initial outcome of his visit to Washington. Not only did the "green light" for a tougher policy in the territories, in the form of a declaration of war, emanate from Washington during his visit, but so did half-hearted permission to 'Arafat supporters to go to the symposium on peace in Europe.

In the final analysis, the Shultz initiative, as has been explained on previous occasions, aims at reviving the Jordanian-Palestinian dialogue in order to rehabilitate 'Arafat in the territories as the dam to block the landslide serving the radicals in the Middle East. The Shultz initiative began with the summoning of Hanna Sinyurah of the PLO, and Elyaqim Rubinstein of the Likud, in an attempt to bring together the PLO and the Likud, according to the Moshe 'Amirav plan.

Rabin could not agree to this, and his reservations were expressed in refusing public figures permission to leave, such as Mustafa al-Natshah, the deposed mayor of Hebron. But figures vital to the U.S. initiative such as Sinyurah and Abu Rahmah, members of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation who are important to renewing the Jordanian-Palestinian dialogue, could leave; Shamir's influence is felt here.

It can thus be said that the deal with Shultz was apparently the following: We, the Americans, give you additional time to restore order in the territories and to join the political process with a better opening position; but in the meantime, help us rehabilitate the standing of the pragmatic supporters of the PLO in the territories. It is hard to believe that Shamir would reject such a deal.

Analyst Views Future Course

TA211400 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 21 Mar 88 p 3

[Article by military commentator Ron Ben-Yishay: "A Single Event or a New Stage in the Uprising"]

[Text] The soldier murdered in Bethlehem yesterday is the first fatality sustained by Israel in the 103 days of the uprising in the territories. Although during the same

period about 100 Arabs have been killed while riots were being dispersed, the rioters almost religiously abstained from using firearms and explosives against IDF soldiers.

And this is no mere coincidence. It took Palestinians in the territories and PLO leaders very little time to realize that the violent, albeit unarmed, struggle serves their cause far better. The long war the security forces have been waging against organized terror created a situation where there are not enough weapons and explosives in the territories to allow an extensive armed struggle, the kind of uprising capable of having the internal reverberations the unarmed uprising has had.

In the last 3 weeks, however, the picture has changed slightly. In several cases, IDF soldiers were attacked with grenades and gunfire upon entering villages and refugee camps. Last weekend an Israeli civilian was shot and wounded near the Jabalyah refugee camp, and yesterday a soldier was murdered.

On the face of it, this development would seem to have been predictable. Senior IDF officers recently said they were getting ready for the stage when the inhabitants of the territories start using firearms, noting that they would know how to deal with such a development when the time comes.

The question is: have we reached that stage? Has the time come to start using all the necessary means to quell this phenomenon? At the moment it is hard to tell whether this is a systematic and intentional trend that is being steered by the elements that are stoking the uprising in the territories. For instance, the PLO has been warning its activists not to use firearms for fear they might lose the points they have scored in world public opinion.

There are other elements active in the territories, however, that might profit from the use of firearms, such as the Syrian-inspired rejectionist organizations and the Muslim fanatics who are not interested in a political process in which 'Arafat's PLO would have a senior role. Also, there are local elements who acquire weapons from Israeli criminal elements and who have been taking independent action. These locals have apparently become disillusioned with throwing stones and firebombs that do not cause real damage.

These elements are probably responsible for the recent shooting incidents and assassination attempts. Such phenomena tend to have a dynamic of their own which might very well expand in the near future, particularly if the IDF manages to reduce the level of violence and the scope of the riots. If PLO leaders perceive the unarmed struggle as dying down, their men will not hesitate to join in the terrorist attacks and shootings to keep the uprising in the headlines.

From now on the IDF will have to reassess the situation with the help of the Shin Bet. It will have to be prepared to thwart terrorist attacks as well as to deal with the disturbances by striking at individuals who engage in armed terrorism, without incensing the entire population and without giving the PLO additional points in world public opinion.

Unrest Said Having 'Marginal' Effect on Economy

TA211506 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Deputy Finance Minister 'Adi Amoray says the situation in the territories is having only a marginal effect on the Israeli economy although problems have arisen in certain sectors, such as construction. In a meeting with parliamentarians from the FRG, Amoray said some 50 percent of the workers from the territories have not come to work; in the tourism industry, which also has a high percentage of workers from the territories, there is hardly any absenteeism.

Amoray said ties between the Israeli economy and the territories amount to more than $1 billion annually. Were the link between the two economies severed, however, the net loss to Israel would be only $100,000, because most of the exports to the territories are offset by imports of services from there.

Poll Tests Attitude to Arabs, Democracy

TA201413 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 20 Mar 88 P 17

[Article by Eli Tavor: "Israel Is Too Democratic"]

[Summary] The riots in the territories and "peace day" events had very little effect on the attitude of Israel's Jewish citizens toward the Arab citizens. This is the conclusion of a poll conducted in mid-January this year, about 1 and 1/2 months after the beginning of the riots. The results are less surprising when compared with a similar poll of July 1987. Both polls were conducted by Professor Efrayim Ya'ar of Tel Aviv University. The poll was conducted on a representative sample of the adult Jewish population in Israel with the exclusion of kibbutzim.

Some 40.1 percent, compared with 40.3 percent in July 1987, thought "the state should encourage Israeli Arab emigration from Israel," 27 percent were "unsure," and less than a third rejected the idea.

Professor Ya'ar explains the fact that people considered liberal also support the idea of emigration by saying that "Israeli liberalism is conditioned by Zionist-nationalist commitments."

The poll, however, shows a change of attitude toward democracy. While only 35.5 percent considered Israel to be too democratic in July 1987, in January 1988 the figure went up to 46.4 percent.

The number of those who think that Israel is "not democratic enough" has dropped from 14.9 percent in July 1987 to 8.7 in January 1988, while the number of those who believe "Israel is sufficiently democratic" has dropped from 49.7 to 44.9 percent in January 1988.

Analyzed according to social background, the findings are even clearer. While 63.5 percent of "religious, low educated, and Sephardic" people maintain that "Israel is too democratic," only 27.3 percent of "secular, highly educated, and Ashkenazi" people subscribe to that opinion.

Professor Ya'ar claims that some 15 to 20 percent of Israel's population maintain antidemocratic opinions. This figure is not to uncommon in other Western societies, but is significant here since the present election system in Israel could have an antidemocratic party, Kahane's KAKH, tipping the scales in the Knesset, says Professor Ya'ar.

Pamphlet 11 Reflects Conflict Between Groups

TA212000 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Excerpts] The Unified National Command of the Uprising distributed limited quantities of Pamphlet No 11 in Judaea and Samaria today. The pamphlet sets dates for various acts of rebellion, focusing on an attempt to bring about the resumption of studies in 3 days, an attempt to depose the municipalities in the territories, and a general strike on 28 March. The pamphlet, however, includes no threats against Jordan's supporters in the territories. This version is apparently a result of an ongoing controversy between the various Palestinian organizations. One manifestation of this controversy was an attempted assassination in the area of Jerusalem today. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari reports:

[Begin recording] The differences of opinion regarding the tactics of the uprising are extremely serious and fervent. The Popular and Democratic Fronts are pushing for shows of force against Jordan and toward anarchy. Fatah prefers partial steps only. The result was an attack last night on Jack Khazmu's house, editor of the magazine AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI, who is considered to be close to Fatah circles. An unidentified person armed with a Kalashnikov and possibly a pistol fired from a distance at the house, located on the main road in the village of Al-Ram. Miraculously he missed some babies who were sleeping at the time. [passage omitted]

Later an attempt was made to set fire to the family's car, which was parked in the yard. Many people regard this incident as further testimony to the effect that behind the unity exhibited in the pamphlets, the beginnings of a fight for the control over the uprising can be discerned. This is the first time that fire has been directed, even if only as a warning, at somebody who is considered a Fatah spokesman. [passage omitted]

Today there were two similar incidents in the Ramallah district. Molotov cocktails were thrown toward the house of Dr Musa Abu (Rash), a member of the Jordanian Parliament, and in the town of Baytuniya an unsuccessful attempt was made to burn the town hall. We should recall that the resignation of the municipalities and Jordanian Parliament members are the two main issues in the argument between Fatah and its partners on the left. [end recording]

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories

IDF Recruits Officers

TA211742 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The IDF is recruiting hundreds of reserve officers from rear units and headquarters for guard and routine security missions in the territories. Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that this step was taken to ease the burden on regular army officers and reserve officers from field units. It has also been decided to recruit Arabic speaking officers to help the Civilian Administration in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza.

Residents Form Committees

TA181358 Jerusalem AL-TALI'AH in Arabic 17 Mar 88 p 1

[Text] In the wake of the collective resignation of Arab policemen, residents of the West Bank are trying to organize popular committees for protection with the aim of filling the current vacuum.

Arab residents have reported that discussions are currently taking place in various locations about the nature, role, and method of activity of these unofficial committees.

In several locations groups of youths have begun organizing guard bodies as occurred in Hebron. After the settlers attacked some Arab homes and cars, groups of youths in Hebron neighborhoods began organizing guard teams, formed observation points on rooftops, and set up roadblocks to prevent the arrival of settlers' cars.

Tax Collections Decline

TA181439 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Report by Dan Sagir and Uri Nir]

[Excerpt] Data issued by the Customs and VAT Department at the Finance Ministry indicate that over the last 2 months there has been a decline of about 20 percent in the collection of VAT in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. The decrease in income stems, first and foremost, from the decrease in the economic activity in the territories since the outbreak of the riots in the middle of December 1987. Another reason is nonpayment of taxes as part of

the political struggle of the inhabitants of the territories, and compliance with the instructions of the leaflet which declared a tax strike, among other things.

It was stated by the Customs and VAT Department that as part of the policy of pressure through economic measures against the residents of the territories, the military authorities are now helping the VAT people especially in their tax-collection efforts. The department's director described the situation as follows: "A good thing came out of a bad thing, namely, tax collection in the territories has been increased. [passage omitted]

Arab Found Dead in Gaza

TA212025 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The body of a 25-year-old Arab was found today in Bayt Hanun, which is in the Gaza Strip. Part of the man's skull had been crushed. The body was taken to Al-Shifa' Hospital in Gaza, after which the police launched an investigation into the circumstances of the youth's death. Military sources told our correspondent Steve Rodan that the young man disappeared from his house 2 days ago and that no military units were deployed in the area of Bayt Hanun.

Khan Yunus Resident Killed

TA221041 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1030 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] An Arab resident of Khan Yunus was shot dead this morning by unknown persons, probably Arabs. Shots were fired at the car he was driving at about 1000. The incident happened at the Nezarim junction in the southern Gaza Strip. Several shots were fired at the Khan Yunus resident's car from another moving vehicle, killing him. The police and the security forces are investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Arab Killed; More Disturbances

TA221216 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Several riots took place in Judaea and Samaria today. This morning it was disclosed that a young Arab was killed last night, probably during a violent riot in the village of Tubas. Our correspondent in Judaea and Samaria Arye Gus reports:

[Begin recording] The body of 26-year-old Hikmat Dhararmah was buried this morning in the Samaria village of Tubas. According to local eyewitnesses, Dhararmah was shot last night during riots in the village. The IDF spokesman confirmed that there had been violent riots in Tubas last night, when crowds of villagers attacked an IDF force with stones and iron tools. In order to extricate themselves, the soldiers fired two shots at the attackers' feet. This morning the Army was notified that a youth had been shot and buried by his family in the interim.

Reports which have not yet been officially confirmed claim that staff of the municipality in Baytuniyah, near Ramallah, have announced their intention to resign. The resignation notices come in the wake of an attempt 2 days ago to set the municipality building on fire and of leaflet No 11, which called for deposing the municipal authorities. The Civilian Administration has apparently not yet received the notices; if it refuses to accept them, the municipality will continue to exist, at least officially.

Disturbances have occurred in other locations as well. A Jewish driver fired several shots near the Balatah refugee camp after being pelted with stones. In Nur al-Shams, a refugee camp near Tulkarm, the army is still constructing a long and high fence to keep stone throwers away from the road.

Arab sources have reported more detentions. It has been learned that approximately 3,000 Arabs are currently being held in detention following arrests during the recent riots. The number of dead now stands at 100, including the Tubas resident.

In the meantime, the Civilian Administration continues to exert pressure on the population. This morning, owners of printing shops in the area were summoned to the Tulkarm Administration offices to receive licenses. This is a new measure, designed to help the authorities supervise the printing shops in the territories in order to prevent the printing of hostile leaflets. Such material is being issued by the Unified National Command of the Uprising and has not stopped appearing, despite the fact that the shop that had originally printed these leaflets was uncovered and its staff detained. [end recording]

More Rioters Wounded 21 Mar

TA211727 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Six Arab youths were wounded by IDF soldiers during today's disturbances in Judaea and Samaria. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that two rioters were wounded in the Al-Fari'ah refugee camp, two in the village of Bani Na'im in the Hebron area, and one in the village of Shuwayhah in the Tulkarm district.

A youth was also wounded in the village of Bayt Fajjar; he was treated by an army doctor who was there and was later taken by an Israeli ambulance to Jerusalem. In the Gaza Strip a Rafah youth was killed by IDF soldiers who were dispersing a riot this morning.

El Al Allowed To Fly Through Riga Airspace

TA201436 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Mar 88 p 1

[Report by aviation affairs correspondent Zohar Blumenkrantz]

[Text] The USSR has permitted El Al planes to fly through its airspace and even published the fact for the first time in an international aviation publication. In the publication, the USSR announces that it will allow Israel's El Al planes to fly through Riga's airspace.

This is the air route of the Israeli company's planes to Helsinki, Finland. The flights are executed by Sun d'Or, the company's subsidiary for international charters, but the name appearing in the Soviet publication is that of El Al.

The report was greeted with "pleasant surprise" by Israeli aviation authorities over the weekend. A senior aviation source told the HA'ARETZ reporter yesterday that the fact the USSR publicly announced the permission in an international publication is of great importance to Israel.

King Returns From Visit to Saudi Arabia, YAR

JN181535 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn returned home at noon today following a 3-day working visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the YAR. [passage omitted]

The prime minister, the chief chamberlain, and the information minister returned with his majesty the king.

U.S. Envoy Habib Arrives for Talks With Husayn

JN201306 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1210 GMT 20 Mar

[Randa Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] U.S. presidential envoy Philip Habib arrived in Amman from Cairo at noon today for talks with Jordanian King Husayn on the results of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's visit to the United States and his meetings with officials in Washington.

It has been learned from a diplomatic source in Amman that Jordan will not give Philip Habib a reply to the U.S. proposals, as requested earlier by the U.S. Administration from the states concerned in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The U.S. envoy's visit comes following Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i's return from Moscow where he held talks with the Kremlin leaders on the new U.S. plan to resolve the Middle East issue, in addition to the issue of Afghanistan.

Diplomatic sources in Amman believe there is a strong connection between the success of negotiations on the Afghan issue and Shultz' Middle East proposals. These sources suggest the existence of some sort of barter between Moscow and Washington for the sake of bringing about the success of negotiations on the Soviet presence in Kabul in return for facilities to be granted by the Kremlin vis-a-vis the U.S. proposals. The same sources believe in the existence of an effective Jordanian role to bring about the success of this equation between the two superpowers.

King Husayn is expected to visit the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, on Tuesday. Pakistan is the party concerned in the current negotiations on the Afghan issue.

In another development, a Palestinian source denied press reports about PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's arrival in Amman today.

The U.S. envoy is expected to leave Amman for Riyadh tomorrow, Monday, as part of his tour of the region, which is scheduled to end in Rabat.

King Receives Habib, Egypt's 'Abd al-Majid

JN201922 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received at Al-Nadwa Palace this afternoon Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egypt's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, who arrived in Amman earlier in the day for the Islamic foreign ministers conference.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid conveyed to his majesty a message from President Mubarak. Present at the meeting were Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i; Court Chief Marwan al-Qasim; Court Minister 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah; Field Marshal Al-Sharif Zayd ibn Shakir, commander in chief of the Armed Forces; and Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri.

On the Egyptian side the meeting was attended by Dr Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary at the Foreign Ministry, and the Egyptian ambassador in Amman.

Also this afternoon, His Majesty King Husayn received Philip Habib, a special U.S. Mideast envoy, who gave him a letter from Secretary of State George Shultz regarding American peace proposals and the outcome of U.S. contacts with the parties concerned, including the Soviet Union.

Also present at the meeting were His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the prime minister, the court chief, the court minister, the commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and the U.S. ambassador in Amman.

Husayn Receives USSR's Mikhail Sytenko 19 Mar

JN191512 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1450 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Amman, 19 Mar (PETRA)—His Majesty King Husayn received Soviet Ambassador at Large Mikhail Sytenko today. Sytenko conveyed to his majesty the Soviet stand toward the Geneva talks on the Afghan issue held under UN auspices and the Soviet Government's recent decision to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. Attending the meeting were His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, Royal Court Chief Marwan al-Qasim, Court Minister 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah, and the Soviet ambassador in Amman.

King, Queen Leave on Visit to Pakistan 22 Mar

JN221031 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur left Amman for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan this morning on an official visit of several days at the invitation of His Excellency President Mohammad Ziaul Haq and his wife. During the visit, his majesty the king will hold talks with his excellency the Pakistani president on issues of interest to both the Arab

and Islamic worlds, developments in the region, and a number of regional and international issues of mutual interest, in addition to bilateral relations and means to bolster and promote them

Their majesties are accompanied on this visit by Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, Courty Minister 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah, Chief Chamberlain His Highness Prince Ra'd ibn Zayd, and Field Marshal Zayd ibn Shakir, commander in chief of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

Their majesties and the accompanying delegation were seen off at Amman Airport by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, Her Highness Princess Tharwat, His Highness Prince Faysal ibn al-Husayn, and a number of the royal family members. Also participating in the sendoff were the Senate president, the speaker of the House of Representatives, the chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, the deputy prime minister, the ministers, the chief of the royal household, the secretary general of the Royal Hashemite Court, senior civilian and military officials, and the Pakistani charge d'affaires in Amman.

Earlier, His Highness Crown Prince Hasan was sworn in as regent before his majesty the king and in the presence of the cabinet members.

Husayn Reportedly To Mediate in Afghan Issue

JN221105 Abu Dhabi Domestic Service in Arabic 0930 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] The newspaper AL-ITTIHAD quotes authoritative sources in Amman as saying that His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan will pay a quick visit, the second in a week, to Saudi Arabia after his visit to Pakistan, which he began today, within the framework of a Jordanian move to convince Pakistan to accept the idea of forming a national recanciliation government in Afghanistan.

The sources added that the Jordanian move comes following a number of high-level contacts and consultations between Moscow and Amman on this subject and that the Jordanian monarch is carrying new proposals, one of which is that the formation of a national reconciliation government should coincide with the return of Afghan refugees, who number about 5 million.

Spokesman on Soviet Withdrawal From Afghanistan

JN181955 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Statement issued by government official spokesman—date, place not given]

[Excerpt] The Jordanian Government has received with great satisfaction the Soviet Government's decision to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. Jordan believes this decision is a wise and courageous step taken by the Soviet Union and its leadership under Mikhail Gorbachev, indicative of an eagerness to disseminate a good and positive atmosphere in international relations. [passage omitted]

Husayn Cables Saudi King on Israeli 'Threats'

JN221226 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn has announced Jordan's vigorous support for fraternal Saudi Arabia in the face of the Israeli threats. In a cable to King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, today, his majesty affirmed that any aggression against Saudi Arabia will be viewed as aggression against Jordan. The following is the text of the cable:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Dear brother King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, God preserve you:

I send my heartfelt greetings, sincere love, and profound appreciation and respect to my dear brother: We have recently heard the Israeli leaders' threats to fraternal Saudi Arabia—threats which express Israel's hostile nature and its indifference to international laws and norms. While condemning these threats, we would like to affirm to our dear brother, the custodian of the two holy mosques, that any aggression against Saudi Arabia will be viewed as aggression against Jordan and that Jordan with all its factions and sectors, foremost of which are the Armed Forces, stand strongly and decisively by your fraternal country. We wish our dear brother continued health and happiness and Saudi Arabia every progress, prosperity, and strength under your wise leadership. May God preserve you.

[Signed] Your brother Husayn

Crown Prince on Soviet 'Powers' at Conference

JN190954 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 19 Mar 88 pp 1, 5

[Excerpt] Amman—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan said Friday that Jordan hopes that the Soviet Union will have veto and arbitration powers at the proposed international peace conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"The Soviet Union's participation at the international peace conference should not be ceremonial," the Crown Prince said. "We hope that (the Soviet participation) will include veto and arbitration power," Prince Hasan told Soviet and Arab participants in a three-day Soviet-Arab dialogue which concluded its sessions here Friday. [Amman JORDAN TIMES in English on 20 March on page 1 publishes the following correction:

"In an inadvertent mistranslation of a speech by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan to the Arab-Soviet dialogue Friday, the JORDAN TIMES quoted the

Crown Prince as saying the Soviet Union should have veto powers in an international conference on the Middle East. In fact, the Crown Prince said that 'Soviet participation should be in a manner that includes decision-making and arbitration powers, and not in a purely protocol manner.' The JORDAN TIMES regrets the error."]

The Soviet participation in the conference "should be effective, and, above everything, should include a role in guaranteeing the basic security (on the region)."

Prince Hasan said the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council should guarantee the implementation of any results reached by the international conference. "... that is, if we are able to reach that point of convening the conference," he siad.

Prince Hasan said any peace plan, including the new American initaitive, would not succeed if there were no agreement between the two superpowers over a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. The success of any peace plan will also need the backing of all members of the Security Council, he said.

The Crown Prince urged the Soviet Union to "actively" pursue efforts to end the Gulf war through a "practical commitment" to U.S. Security Council Resolution 598.

In an earlier session of the Arab-Soviet dialogue, Soviet participants, who include prominent scholars and historians, stressed the danger of the presence of the American and other Western fleets in the Gulf and reiterated Moscow's call for replacing of the Western navy by a multinational fleet under the U.N. flag.

In his response, Prince Hasan stressed that the implementation of Resolution 598 in all its provisions and putting an end of the war remained the real solution for the crisis in the Gulf.

"A practical commitment to Resolution 598 will save us the effort of discussing the presence of any fleets in the Gulf, whether Western or multinational," he said.

In conclusion, the Prince pointed out the identical stands of Jordan and the Soviet Union on many issues and hoped that the Arab-Soviet dialogue launched in Amman would continue. The head of the Soviet delegation, Dr Kapitsa, director of the Insitute for Oriental Studies, thanked Jordan and the Prince personally for hosting the dialogue. The dialogue, the first of its kind, was organised by the Arab Thought Forum.

Kapitsa said that as a result of the dialogue Sovet scholars "have developed a better understanding of the Arab position and views." He called for more Arab-Soviet consultations and talks. "We hope that this meeting will. become a tradition," he said. [passage omitted]

Reportage on Prime Minister's Visit to Moscow

Leaves for Moscow 18 Mar

JN181717 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i left Amman this afternoon for Moscow to meet with Soviet leaders and exchange with them views on matters on mutual concern. The prime minister was seen off at Amman airport by the deputy premier, the minister of state for parliamentary affairs, and the information minister, in addition to the Soviet ambassador in Amman.

Arrives on 'Working Visit'

LD181921 Moscow TASS in English 1840 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—Zayd al-Rifa'i, prime minister and minister of defence of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, arrived in Moscow today on a working visit.

Talks With Ryzhkov

JN200815 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i last night returned to Amman following a 2-day visit to Moscow. Nikolay Ryzhkov, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, received Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i at the Kremlin yesterday afternoon. During the meeting, opinions were exchanged on bilateral relations and ways of developing them in the light of the recent agreements reached between Gorbachev and His Majesty King Husayn during His Majesty's visit to Moscow in December 1987.

During their discussion of the international situation, priority was given to Middle and Near East issues and ways of solving them, and to the situation in Afghanistan. The meeting, which was permeated by a friendly atmosphere, was attended by Kamentsev, deputy chairman of the USSR's Council of Ministers, and Vorontsov, first deputy foreign minister.

USSR Foreign Minister Shevardnadze also received the Prime Minister at the Foreign Ministry yesterday. The conferees pointed out that the popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories and the Israeli forces' oppressive measures against it are attracting world attention and thus the urgent need to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict has emerged.

The two sides pointed out that the only way to achieve a comprehensive peace and just settlement to all the region's issues, especially the central cause, is to call for an international conference with the participation of all parties which are directly involved, including the PLO and the five permanent members of the Security Council. The two sides exchanged opinions on the new U.S. plan to solve the Middle East crisis.

The Afghan question was discussed, and Al-Rifa'i, on behalf of the Jordanian leadership, has welcomed the Soviet Union's efforts to speed up the signing of a peace accord in Geneva to solve the Afghan question. The two sides pointed to the need to mobilize efforts to put a quick end to the Iraq-Iran war on the basis of Security Council Resolution No 598. The two sides expressed their satisfaction with the development of Jordanian-Soviet relations following the recent talks between Gorbachev and His Majesty King Husayn during His Majesty's visit to the Soviet Union in December 1987.

The prime minister met yesterday evening in Moscow with heads of Arab diplomatic missions in Moscow. He briefed them on Jordan's efforts under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn to serve the Palestinian Arab peoples' cause and the Jordanian stand on the peace process in the region.

Departs Moscow

LD102125 Moscow TASS in English 1618 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Moscow March 19 TASS—Zayd al-Rifa'i, prime minister of Jordan, left Moscow today. He paid a short working visit to the Soviet capital as a special representative of the king of Jordan for holding consultations on Middle East problems.

Returns From Moscow 19 Mar

JN192126 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i returned to Amman tonight following a day visit to Moscow. During the visit, he held talks with Nikolay Ryzhkov, chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and Eduard Shevardnadze, USSR minister of foreign affairs, on the situation in the Middle East and the ongoing peace efforts, including the proposed U.S. ideas.

Talks also dealt with developments in the Iraq-Iran war and the need to end it in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No 598 as well as on a number of political issues of mutual interest and on relations between Jordan and the USSR in various areas.

The prime minister met in Moscow this evening with heads of the Arab diplomatic missions in Moscow. He briefed them on Jordan's efforts under His Majesty King Husayn to serve the cause of the Palestinian Arab people. He also briefed them on Jordan's stand on the peace process in the region.

Receiving Al-Rifa'i at Amman airport were the deputy prime minister and education minister; the minister of state for parliamentary affairs; the information minister; the interior minister; the minister of state for prime ministry affairs; the USSR ambassador in Amman; and a number of senior officials.

Seeing Al-Rifa'i off at Moscow airport were the first deputy prime minister, the first deputy foreign minister, the Jordanian ambassador in Moscow, and a number of heads of Arab diplomatic missions in the Soviet capital.

Amman Proposed as Site for 'Uprising' Summit

JN180857 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0830 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Kuwait, 18 Mar (WAKH)—The Kuwaiti paper AL-QABAS said today that Jordan has proposed hosting the emergency Arab summit called by Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid to discuss ways of supporting the heroic Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation.

Citing authoritative Arab sources in Paris, AL-QABAS says that Jordanian officials held secret contacts with some Arab countries and parties and with the PLO over the past few days and proposed to them that the emergency Arab summit convene in Amman at the set time, that is, in the first half of April.

Explosion Destroys Building in West Beirut

Cause Undetermined

NC211735 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1725 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Shortly after 1900 today a huge explosion rocked the Al-Maqasid area in West Beirut. The cause of the blast has yet to be determined. According to initial reports, the blast completely destroyed a 4-story building. The reports also indicate that lives have been lost. We have just been informed that the explosion was caused by a booby-trapped car parked near the Al-Maqasid Hospital in West Beirut. According to a Civil Defense source, the blast left a number of people dead or wounded and a nearby four-story building completely destroyed. Firefighters are currently fighting the fires that broke out in the area.

Blast Kills 1, Injures 13

NC211936 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] It has been determined that the blast that rocked an old, inhabited four-story building on Al-Rawwas Street in Al-Maqasid area was generated by an explosive charge and not by a booby-trapped car, as previously stated by Civil Defense sources. The blast left Muhammad Rashad al-Kurdi dead and 13 other people wounded, 1 seriously. Shortly after the explosion, Red Cross and Civil Defense cars rushed to the scene to rescue the wounded.

Shams al-Din Views Kidnappings, Uprising

NC220701 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, has said that the foreign hostages have become an issue of international dimensions and a field of effort by numerous intelligence services. He maintained that the use of kidnapping as a political method has reached an end. Shaykh Shams al-Din called for efforts to confront U.S. activity to contain the uprising [in the Israeli occupied territories]. He described this uprising as an extremely valuable card in the hands of the Muslims, which must not be wasted.

Fadlallah: Uprising 'Embarrassment' to Egypt

NC220707 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has said that the uprising in the occupied territories has become a great embarrassment to the big Arab state which has established peace with Israel. He declared that the Arab allies of the United States are attempting to contain the uprising in the consciousness of the masses by trying to use it in surrender schemes. In addition, he said, they are seeking to prevent the people from fully understanding it and from having any great effect on political reality.

9 February Group Claims Attacks on Syrians

Plants Charge by Tripoli Center

NC201431 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] A spokesman for the Khalil 'Akkawi unit of the 9 February Organization has announced that one of the unit's squads planted an explosive charge near a Syrian occupation forces center in Tripoli yesterday. The charge went off, inflicting losses on the Syrian troops. The spokesman pointed out that the Syrian forces indiscriminately opened fire for 30 minutes.

Wounds 3 in Night Raids

NC211008 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The Khalil 'Akkawi unit of the 9 February Organization has claimed responsibility for carrying out three attacks last night with hand grenades and machineguns against Syrian occupation forces centers in Tripoli. At least three Syrian soldiers were wounded. Meanwhile, reports from Tripoli say a 10-story building on Al-Mutran Street collapsed this morning, causing several casualties.

Kills 2 Syrians in North

NC221504 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] The Khalil 'Akkawi unit of the 9 February Organization has claimed responsibility for yesterday evening's ambush of a Syrian occupation forces military land rover vehicle on the new 'Adwi Road in the north. According to a spokesman for the organization, the ambush resulted in the deaths of two Syrians.

Shelling, Resistance Operations Noted

NC191337 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Excerpts] In the south, Israeli occupation forces, in cooperation with their Lahd militia agents, have continued to step up their acts of aggression. Their artillery began shelling the towns of Mashgharah, 'Ayn al-Tinah, Tallat al-Jabbur, the vicinity of the Taw'amat Niha position, and the Al-Dallafah area this morning. According to information received from these areas, the shelling was still going on at 1230 today.

Our correspondent in the south has reported that the town of Kafr Rumman came under 120-mm artillery shelling from positions held by the enemy and his agents in (Tallat al-Sati) at 1130 today. The shelling caused property damage. Meanwhile, numerous bursts of sniper fire were directed at the town of 'Ayta al-Jabal from the

agents' positions in Bayt Yahun at 0900 today. Maydun and 'Ayn al-Tinah were subjected to artillery shelling from posts held by agent Lahd's militia inside the border strip last night. [passage omitted]

This morning the national resistance bombarded the agents' positions in Al-Dallafah, Birkat al-Jabbur, and Hasbayya hills. Agent Lahd's radio admitted the shelling but did not mention any casualties.

It is worth mentioning that the martyr Mustafa Ahmad Qamar group of the Lebanese Resistance Brigades-Amal ambushed an agent patrol near the Taw'amat Niha position yesterday afternoon, destroying two vehicles and killing or injuring 10 agents. Another group shelled the Taw'amat Niha position yesterday. A resistance fighter was wounded and taken to the liberated area.

At 0700 today, an Israeli mechanized force tried to advance in the Al-Jabbur area in the western sector, under cover of intensive and concentrated artillery shelling of most areas in this sector. Fierce clashes took place between the advancing Israeli forces and groups of the Lebanese Resistance Brigades-Amal and the Islamic resistance. The clashes were continuing intermittently at 1230. The violent shelling of most of the western sector has also continued.

Resistance Group Ambushes Israeli Patrol

NC191704 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] A Lebanese resistance group ambushed an Israeli mechanized patrol between Al-Suwayda' and Tura at 1100 today. The resistance fighters hit the patrol with rockets and machineguns. An enemy vehicle was put out of commission and its passengers either killed or wounded. Meanwhile, resistance support groups pounded the Al-Suwayda' and Tura positions.

Amal Fighters Launch 'Wide-Scale' Attacks

NC211247 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] At dawn today, groups of the Lebanese Resistance Brigades-Amal launched a series of wide-scale operations against enemy and agent positions in Rshaf, Haddathah, Bra'shit, Bayt Yahun, and Al-Suwayda', during which fierce battles were fought. The enemy lost many lives and much equipment and its fortifications, installations, and emplacements were destroyed. Simultaneously, the resistance artillery used mortars and rockets of various calibers to shell enemy and agents positions in Rshaf, Jabal Humayd, Haddathah, Bayt Yahun, Bra'shit, Al-Qantarah, 'Alman, Al-Shumariyah, Al-Duhayrah, Al-Suwayda', and Sujud.

Upon the arrival of enemy reinforcements at the Al-Suwayda' position, the martyr Hasan Da'ud group launched a second attack on the position, inflicting further losses on the enemy. The operations lasted 4 hours, after which all the groups returned safely to base.

SLA Confronts Attacking Resistance Fighters

NC211205 Marj 'Uyun Lebanon Voice of Hope in Arabic 1100 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The South Lebanese Army [SLA] delivered a hard blow to the saboteurs today by confronting a series of attacks on its positions and by forcing the gunmen to retreat, leaving behind their dead and wounded as well as ammunition and arms.

At dawn today, SLA posts in Bint Jubayl and Al-'Ayshiyah came under armed attack and rocket and artillery shelling. Two attacks were staged against SLA posts in Al-Qantarah and 'Arab Salim. Soldiers manning these two posts confronted the large groups of attackers and forced them to retreat after clashes involving various types of weapons.

This coincided with rocket and artillery shelling of SLA posts in Bra'shit, Shaqif al-Naml, Bayt Yahun, Al-Shumariyah, and Sujud. Security authorities said that Shaqif al-Naml was shelled from a post near a UNIFIL position, Bayt Yahun was shelled from Safad al-Battikh, and Al-Shumariyah was shelled from the towns of Al-Ghanduriyah and Zawtar al-Sharqiyah. The SLA confronted all these attacks and returned fire without sustaining any casualties. Afterwards, the SLA began search operations, which are still in progress.

Israeli Radar Installation Destroyed 21 Mar

NC221304 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Security sources reported that yesterday an Israeli radar installation was destroyed in the Al-Qawzah hills during clashes between Israeli troops and fundamentalist gunmen.

Briefs

Envoy to Sierra Leone Received

Jawdat Nur al-Din, Lebanese ambassador to Sierra Leone, has presented his credentials to the president of Sierra Leone. During their meeting the president affirmed that his country is following up developments in Lebanon and believes that Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected by all. He stated that Lebanese citizens in Sierra Leone are treated according to the law and enjoy protection. [Text] [*NC181855 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 Mar 88*]

Afghanistan

Foreign Ministry Statement on ICO Conference

LD212016 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Republic of Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs announcement concerning the convocation of the 17th conference of ICO member countries' foreign ministers which was held today, 21 March 1988 in Amman, the capital of Jordan. This conference has been convened at a very critical and tense time in the history of the Islamic world and the Middle East. This is a time when, on the one hand, the antiprogress and antipeace forces and the enemies of Islam are consistently pursuing destructive plans that threaten peace in the region and in the world as a whole, and on the other hand, when the countries of the world, including the Islamic countries, are facing urgent and vital issues. Their solution is on the daily agenda of the international community.

The republican Government of Afghanistan profoundly believes that the countries of the Islamic world are strongly in need of concentrating their attention more than ever before on how the acute problems of these countries should be solved. In our opinion, the most important issues to be discussed at the 17th conference of Islamic countries' foreign ministers should be the following:

Maintaining the rights of the Muslim and persecuted people of Palestine and the salvation of Bayt al-Muqaddas [Jerusalem]—the first religious instruction site of the world's Muslims—from the yoke of the Zionist Israeli state;

Putting an end to the occupation of south Lebanon and the interference of other aggressive countries in that Islamic country;

Putting an end to the occupation of Middle East countries' territory and of the Golan Heights by the Israelis;

Confronting the serious threat to the national interests of the Arab and other Islamic countries, which has resulted from the strategic Washington-Tel Aviv alliance;

Maintaining the Western Saharan Muslim people's right to self-determination;

Ceasing the fratricidal war between the two Islamic countries, Iran and Iraq;

Solving the socioeconomic growth issues of the Islamic countries;

Creating a new international economic order; and

Most important of all, discussing issues related to the struggle for peace and detente and against the warmongering, militarist policies and Zionism, which have seriously endangered peace and security, not only in the Islamic world, but among all of humanity.

The Islamic world today faces complicated problems that threaten its cultural identity, solidarity, and unity. In our opinion, the present situations demand that we strengthen the unity and solidarity of the Islamic umah and courageously take an active part in promoting the prosperity of the Islamic people of the world.

We hope that the fraternal Islamic countries will unite forces in order to maintain peace and stability in the Islamic world and that this will be the fundamental (?aim) of this conference. As has been revealed, due to the inclinations of reactionary ruling circles of some Islamic countries, this conference intends to discuss the so-called Afghanistan question. It is obvious that such a design not only is not relevant to the interests of the Islamic countries, but is also contrary to the goodwill of the people and the principled concessions and sincere flexibilities of the Republic of Afghanistan in light of the national reconciliation policy which aims to peacefully solve the situation around Afghanistan. It only helps to further aggravate this situation and will be utilized for the purpose of fanning propaganda against our Muslim country.

As an Islamic country and a founding member of the ICO, Afghanistan is loyal and pledged to the charter and aims of this organization. It has always tried and continues to try to maintain good and friendly relations with all Islamic countries, including its neighbors, Iran and Pakistan. The national reconciliation policy that has been announced is in accordance with Islamic principles and, relying on fraternity, tolerance, and humanism, is the only alternative to war which, despite the hostilities it creates, opens a way for the realization of peace, tranquillity, and prosperity for our country and all Muslim people. The national reconciliation policy has created new horizons for strengthening the credibility, recognition, and prestige of the Republic of Afghanistan internationally.

The visit of the Republic of Afghanistan's special goodwill delegations to 54 countries of the world, the majority of which were Islamic countries, and the dispatch of the republican Government of Afghanistan's goodwill messages addressed to the heads of states, governments, and foreign ministers of the Islamic countries are manifestations of our goodwill and solidarity with the Islamic world. They are valuable steps toward the broader and expanded maintenance of the peace-seeking and humanitarian aims of the national reconciliation policy and its realization in our country. The recent visit by the foreign minister of the Republic of Afghanistan to four Islamic countries is another important step toward the fruitful explanation of this matter. As a result of his meetings

with the leaders of these countries, an atmosphere of confidence, understanding, and reciprocal cooperation between our countries has been created.

The Islamic people of Afghanistan place all their thoughts and hopes on the speedy establishment of peace, security, and tranquility in their persecuted land. The Republic of Afghanistan's principled and sincere stand at the Geneva talks is a manifestation of the fact that the Republic of Afghanistan pays serious attention to the urgent, just, and peaceful solution of the Afghan situation and, along with necessary concessions and flexibility and the manifestation of political goodwill for the final success of the Geneva talks, has made and continues to make efforts.

The 8 February statements by Esteemed Najibullah and Esteemed Gorbachev and also the 15 March statements of the Republic of Afghanistan and the government of the Soviet Union proves these facts. However, at the present round of talks the Pakistani delegation, unfortunately, is engaged in the creation of artificial obstacles, which delay the signing of the final accords. By delaying the signing of the Geneva accords, under artificial pretexts Pakistan and the United States are incorrectly assuming that the withdrawal of the Soviet forces still will begin on 15 May.

For in accordance with the agreements that have already been reached in Geneva, all the documents, including the return of the Soviet forces, are to be implemented 60 days after the signing of these documents. Therefore, those who delay the signing of the agreements naturally delay the withdrawal of the Soviet units proportionally. The responsibility for this will rest with them. There is still the possibility that, pursuing sound mind, political realism, and goodwill, decisive steps will be taken toward an agreement. The Republic of Afghanistan, desiring the unity and solidarity of the Islamic World, works toward safeguarding the interests of the Islamic world and the protection of the ICO's sovereignty. In consideration of all these facts, it is clear to every neutral and realistic observer that the only purpose of (?including) the so-called question of Afghanistan in the discussion of the 17th conference of Islamic foreign ministers is to divert the attention and efforts of the conference away from acute and hot issues of the Islamic countries.

The conference should pay attention to the prevention of such [word indistinct] plans and try to devote more of its time to those issues which are damaging the unity of the Islaic world. We strongly feel that there is no logic in excluding our Islamic country from the ICO and its meetings. The suspension of the Republic of Afghanistan's membership in this organization is completely unjust and lacking in every sort of reason. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan authoritatively emphasizes that any discussion of the so-called question of Afghanistan is not only an open negation of the ICO Charter and of the UN Charter, but is also unjustifiable and open interference in the internal affairs of our Islamic country.

While protesting such anti-Afghan and anti-Islamic plans, the Foreign Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan declares that whatever decisions and resolutions are adopted in the absence of a representative delegation of the Republic of Afghanistan at the instigation of imperialism, reaction, and Zionism will lack legality as far as our country is concerned, and the Republic of Afghanistan will not consider itself bound by them.

Najibullah, Zahir Shah Reportedly Meet in Moscow

BK211434 Hong Kong AFP in English 1416 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Peshawar, March 21 (AFP)—A former top official in Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry said Monday that President Najibullah met former Afghan King Zahir Shah in Moscow seven months ago. "Mr. Najibullah flew secretly to Moscow on the order of his masters at the Kremlin," said Ghulam Ghaws Amir, 45, at a press conference at the headquarters of the rebel group Hezb-e Eslami (Himatyar faction). "During his brief stay in the Soviet Union he met former King Zahir Shah," said Mr. Amir, now a refugee in this Pakistani border city.

Mr. Amir, who was former deputy chief of the Foreign Ministry's Judicial Department in Kabul, said the meeting took place "seven months ago"—which would have been August 1987. He added that the Kabul regime then contacted the Indian Government, asking that it make contact with the former king—overthrown in 1973—"to ask him to return to Kabul and form a coalition government."

Zahir Shah Denies Meeting

AU221030 Paris AFP in English 1003 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Rome, March 22 (AFP)—The deposed king of Afghanistan, Zahir Shah, has denied reports from Pakistan that he had held a meeting with Afghan leader Najibullah seven months ago in Moscow. A spokesman for the ex-king, who lives in Rome, said Tuesday that the former monarch "categorically and emphatically refuted ... all aspects of this malicious fabrication."

"The ex-king regrets that an information of this sort can be spread with such irresponsibility," the spokesman added. The denial followed reports quoting a former official of the Foreign Ministry in Kabul who recently sought refuge in Pakistan, alleging that a meeting between the ex-king of Afghanistan and Najibullah took place in Moscow seven months ago, following which a third party was said to have acted as an intermediary. Meanwhile, in an interview published Tuesday by the British daily THE INDEPENDENT, Zahir Shah, 73,

endorsed for the first time the long-standing "jirga," or grand meeting, proposal put forward by the three moderate Afghan guerrilla groups based in Peshawar, Pakistan.

"The decision for the future belongs to the Muslim and mujahidin (guerrilla fighter) people of Afghanistan. A jirga, representative of all the elements that constitute the Afghan nation, should be convened in order to form a united organization which would have the support of the majority of the people," the ex-king said. He stressed that after a pullout of the estimated 115,000 Soviet troops, Afghanistan should be "an Islamic, free and democratic society," adding that he considered it his "religious and national duty" to stand next to "the heroic people of Afghanistan." Zahir Shah, who spent 40 years on the throne, said that "Afghans have always worked out things together when outsiders have left them alone. We will do so again."

Pakistan Charge Summoned Over 17 Mar F16 Attack

LD211753 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The Pakistani charge d'affaires in Kabul was summoned to the Foreign Affairs Ministry today and the incumbent officer stated the following to him: In accordance with reports from Afghan security sources, three MI17 helicopters were fired on with rockets by one Pakistani F16 plane on 17 March, 1988, at 1352 in the Barg-e Matal area while they were returning from Barikowt garrison to Feyzabad after delivering supplies to the former. The Republic of Afghanistan strongly protests to the Government of Pakistan about this violation by the Pakistani Air Force and demands from a responsible Pakistan source that Pakistan desist from these irresponsible acts which will have no other consequences than a further deterioration in relations. Otherwise the responsibility for such dangerous consequences will rest with the Pakistani sources.

Soviet Preparations for Withdrawal Reported

OW221135 Tokyo KYODO in English 1121 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Islamabad, March 22 KYODO—The Soviets have started preparations for their withdrawal by taking inventories of the places they occupy, relocating Soviet civilians to areas close to the Soviet Embassy and stockpiling fuel and ammunition to be handed over to the Kabul regime, Western diplomatic sources said Tuesday. Quoting reliable sources in Kabul, the diplomats said that the Kabul regime has told its ministers that they should make their own security arrangements since the security guards at their residences will now be required to man Kabul defense perimeters. The regime has announced extension of the security ring around Kabul by three more miles but the plan seems unworkable due to the precarious situation of the Afghan Army, they said.

The diplomats said the Soviets were stockpiling fuel beyond the capital's needs and consignments of ammunition were being airlifted to Qandahar city. One diplomat has stated that Soviet personnel were taking over houses near the Soviet Embassy in Darul-Aman in the Afghan capital, presumably to move Soviet civilians into more defensible positions. Senior Soviet Air Force personnel from Mazar-e Sharif in northern Afghanistan reportedly visited Kabul in mid-March for an important inspection related to evacuation planning.

In their private talks, Afghan regime officials are reported to be expressing great apprehension about their security in the event the Afghan mujahidin increase their pressure on the capital following a unilateral Soviet withdrawal or a military aid cutoff by the Soviets. Moscow statements that Soviet forces might withdrawl unilaterally from Afghanistan have created a dilemma for the Kabul regime since such a withdrawal would contradict years of assurances that Soviet forces would stay until other outside interference ceased, the diplomats said.

Mujahidin Seize Khowst Military Outpost

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[Text] Islamabad, March 20 (AFP)—Afghan guerrillas have seized the Soviet-Afghan military post of Zarmanki near Khowst following heavy fighting in which four rebels and dozens of government troops were killed, rebel sources said Sunday. Four mujahidin were killed and five injured Saturday near the plain of Khowst in Paktia Province south of Kabul, while several dozen government troops were killed and 50 captured, the sources said. Soviet-Afghan forces launched a counter-attack for the stronghold, 10 kilometres (six miles) southwest of Khowst, but it was repulsed, they added.

The Afghan rebel siege of the garrison town of Khowst, which began in 1979, was lifted for three weeks on January 1, during which the towns' defences were significantly reinforced when government convoys could pass through.

Keshtmand Speech to Council of Ministers

LD162315 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Speech by Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand to the Council of Ministers meeting on 14 March in Kabul—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed members of the Council of Ministers, comrades, and dear friends:

In a few days, this year, 1366 [March 1987-March 1988], the year which will be registered in the history of our country as the year for the practical implementation of the national reconciliation policy and the year for the restoration of peace and calm in our persecuted land,

will be ending. During this year formidable transformations have taken place in the sociopolitical and economic life of our society, and formidable measures have been taken in these areas. To realize the national reconciliation policy, the country's responsibility for socioeconomic growth has been given a major role. The government, in the complicated circumstances arising from the undeclared war, has been striving to carry out the duties regarding the socioeconomic growth plan and the state budget. The government plan and budget for the current year, which are dedicated again to raising the living standard of the Afghan people, have been designed in the country's present difficult and complicated situation.

It should be noted that the current year demonstrates the enhanced level of activities by the government and political leadership in the international arena, in particular, the constructive initiatives which have been proposed for the political solution to the situation surrounding Afghanistan. The statements about Afghanistan by Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan, and Comrade M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, enjoy enormous importance in the restoration of peace in our country. By issuing these statements all practical barriers created by Pakistan to the peaceful solution to Afghanistan's problem and the signing of agreements in the Geneva talks have been removed. In the current year formidable measures have been taken too to raise the people's livings standard.

The salaries of the Armed Forces personnel have been increased. The salaries of draftees have been increased 5-10 times. The military commissaries where the armed forces personnel and their families can obtain food and industrial goods at low prices are operating in practice. Government aid for luncheon money for workers and employees has increased 1 and 1/2 times. The free distribution of flour or wheat and cooking oil by coupon to government workers and employees, those disabled in the path of the revolution or at work, and martyrs' families has been made universal. At present, every month approximately 340,000 coupon holders receive 56 kg of flour or wheat and 6 kg of cooking oil each free of charge. An extra allowance is paid to workers and employees in compensation for weather or regional conditions. If we assess all these measures in general, approximately 4 million subjects have benefited from the raised living standard. This has been regarded as one of our most important gains. All of these have been realized in 1 year.

Esteemed comrades, in assessing the draft plan and government budget for 1367 [begins 21 March 1988] today we can point out that the envisaged duties in this plan are dedicated to the fundamental direction of Afghanistan's socioeconomic growth during 1365-69. The growth in national economic indices has been envisaged in the draft plan. The concentration of investments in important projects which are being rapidly prepared for exploitation have been envisioned in the plan with the rational and economical utilization of material and financial resources. Approximately 261 large and small projects, each of which is considerably important, will be commissioned in 1367, which will greatly benefit us. The positive transformations taking place in our national economy in various localities despite the complex circumstances will assist the country's socioeconomic growth.

The following facts and figures concerning the implementation of the country's socioeconomic development plan in 1366 may be noted:

Assessments reveal that the gross domestic product in 1366, in comparison to that of 1365, increased at the rate of 3.7 billion afghanis or 2.4 percent, and national income increased respectively by 2.4 billion afghanis or 2.3 percent. Separate specific positive results were achieved in the growth of various spheres. The gross agricultural production in 1366 grew 0.7 percent in comparison to that of 1365. The government distributed 155,000 tonnes of chemical fertilizer worth 105 million afghanis and insecticide to increase the level of agricultural production. The peasants were assisted by the distribution of improved seeds for wheat, cotton, and sugar beets. More work has been done by agricultural machinery. As you know, this year we paid a lot of attention to the task of purchasing wheat. Approximately 170,000 tonnes of wheat were purchased. This is the first time in the country's history that this size a purchase has taken place.

The production of coal, cement, brick, and gravel also increased. The output of electricity, timber industries, various kinds of light industries, and foodstuffs increased. The construction program was implemented. Investments from domestic sources worth 33.3 billion afghanis are being implemented. Large development projects such as the smelting foundry at the Jangalak factories, the blood bank, Kabul's concrete pipe factory, the rail station at Towraghoidi's, the Mazar-e Sharif silo, the dormitory at the Sarandoy academy, the pedagogy institute, the gas station in (Hayratan), the terminal at Kabul International Airport, and a number of other projects were commissioned. Moreover 72 schools, friendship schools, and the Watan nursery school in Mazar-e Sharif, approximately 1,500 apartments, 10 stores, and more than a 100-km road for motor vehicles were constructed.

The implementation of fundamental plans in the areas of transport and communication is being realized; however, as a whole, the task of transporting loads is not satisfactory. The pace of transporting goods from the ports is also very slow. The volume of passengers using air transportation has increased by 6.4 percent, and the turnover of commodities has increased by 8.5 percent. Along with the positive results there were shortcomings in the work of a number of ministries, departments, and institutions during the current year. These shortcomings negatively affected the task of implementing plan indices. This, in addition to objective causes, shows the low

level of activities by a number of industrial production sectors, and the weak control by those responsible in the ministries and departments over the work of their respective enterprises.

It must be said that, in addition to decreases in the output of cotton fabrics, their quality is also not being improved. The duration of idleness in gin and press factories, and of not utilizing their full capacity due to shortages of raw cotton, is being extended. At the recently convened cotton growers assembly, we announced steps that concern the interests of pesants to increase the output level of this important industrial plant—cotton. In any case, all options must be used for implementing all envisaged measures concerning increasing the output and purchase of cotton.

The Ministry of Electrical Energy is working in accordance with plan indices. However, it must take effective steps to decrease the waste of electric energy in the power networks. Additionally, in conjunction with the Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Transport, and other relevant authorities, it must increase control of transporting fuel for the normal operation of thermal power stations and diesel power generators in accordance with the specified [word indistinct].

The Ministry of Defense has not implemented the relevant plan regarding the output of tailoring products; the Ministry of Internal Affairs has not implemented the plan concerning the output of carpets; and the Ministry of Commerce has not implemented the relevant plan regarding processing of walnuts and raisins and production of animal food. Plans for the production of sugar and of fruit and vegetable conserves probably would not be implemented. In addition to decreases in the financial output, this also entails a lack of supply to the inhabitants of essential commodities.

Production growth in private manufacturing industries in the current year has been assessed at 94.4 percent of the plan. The main reason for this is the unsatisfactory supply of materials, especially raw materials, to private enterprises for the utilization of their production capacities. Similarly, there are shortcomings in providing enterprises with electricity, spare parts, and skilled cadres. All this indicates halfhearted work by the leadership of ministries that deal with the private sector. Therefore, it can be said that the duties regarding work by the government with the private investors have not been completely fulfilled.

Ministries and departments should adopt specific measures in removing shortcomings in industry. The plan for the year beginning 21 March 1988 places serious new tasks before us. The rate of growth in industrial output has been envisaged as 6.2 percent, including growth of 7.9 percent in the state and mixed sectors, 12.5 percent inprivate manufacturing industries, and 2.4 percent in handicraft industries. Therefore, electrical output will increase by 5 percent, construction material by 7.2 percent, machine-building and steel production by 13.2 percent, chemical and pharmacological industries by 28.2 percent, light industries by 25.8 percent, and foodstuff industries by 12.3 percent.

To achieve these tasks, officials of the ministries and departments should henceforth place serious demands on the relevant enterprises. They should specify work programs, and organizational, technical, and economic measures; they should also provide the conditions for their implementation. The issues concerning the completion of cadre supply, technical preparedness, and the production and supply of raw materials should be urgently resolved. Ministries working with industry—especially the Ministries of Light Industry and Foodstuffs, Mines and Industries, and the Ministry of Commerce—should carefully assess the possibilities of providing assistance to private industries.

The Ministries of Commerce, Transport, and Electrical Energy should jointly solve the issue of providing fuel to thermal electricity stations. They should draft and implement the plan for the transporting of fuel in accordance with allocated funds. The Ministry of Electrical Energy should intensify its efforts to maintain the level of water in reservoirs for the continuous functioning of hydroelectrical stations, and should also improve the technical state of electricity transmission systems, generators, and stations. The Ministry of Mines and Industries should pay special attention to the work in gas fields. They should achieve a maximum level of gas extraction under reasonable conditions, and should achieve not less than 70 percent of [words indistinct] gas into high-quality fuel.

Special tasks have been assigned to the Ministries of Light Industry and Foodstuffs, Commerce, Agriculture and Land Reform to provide the population with consumer goods. Planned targets for the production of textiles, ginned cotton, flour, bakery products, and macaroni, vegetable oil, sugar and conserves should be fulfilled or even overfulfilled. To accomplish this, problems concerning assistance to farmers should be solved first. Similarly, improvements in the system for the purchase of agricultural products should be assessed. Everyone knows very well that the pace of growth in the national economy, and especially successful work in industry and in other areas is, in most cases, determined by indicators achieved in agriculture. However, we have not as yet been able to achieve our planned targets in this field. During the year ending 20 March 1988 a considerable amount of the agricultural products envisaged in the plan were not produced.

We have said time and again that the condition of the state agricultural sector can in no way satisfy us. Officials of the ministries and the councils of people's delegates of the provinces should adopt urgent and effective measures for transforming state farms into model and self-sufficient enterprises. They should organize effective work in mechanized agricultural farms on the basis of

self-sufficiency and profit-making. These tasks have great political, social, and economic importance. All of us should take into account that, with the successful solution to issues concerning the growth of the state sector and the cooperative movement, we create a new type of production relations and thereby promote to a new level the growth of the production forces in one of the main sectors of the national economy.

In the course of drafting the plan for capital investment for the year 1367, the State Planning Committee, together with ministries and departments has succeeded in solving a number of problems related to raising the level of investment effectiveness. The plan envisages the concentration of investment in transitional and short-term projects. In 1367, the total number of projects, particularly new projects, was reduced compared with 1366.

All projects of Afghan-Soviet cooperation and of other friendly countries have been provided with essential material. Measures have been adopted for the effective utilization of the USSR grant-in-aid and for direct cooperation between Afghanistan's provinces and Soviet oblasts and republics. Taking into consideration the limitation on the country's foreign currency, only half of the exchangable currency has been envisaged for use in development projects in 1367 as compared with 1366. Aid for development projects from friendly countries and international organizations continues to be used in the same manner as in the past. The total volume of foreign aid for 1367 is planned to be about $223.3 million, which is 14.5 percent more compared to 1366. As in the past, the main portion of this aid, that is 97 percent, is given by the Soviet Union and other CEMA member-countries. Of this amount, the Soviet share equals 81 percent of the total.

It is necessary to point out a series of shortcomings and difficulties that should be removed in the process of implementing the plan for 1367. A number of projects of great importance have been included in the plan without having completed the technical documents or the signed protocols from relevant authorities. This can chiefly be said for the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reform, the Ministry of Light Industry and Foodstuff, as well as some other ministries and departments.

The Ministry of Construction Affairs is not paying serious attention to extending the production capacities of relevant construction firms and to signing protocols in accordance with their capacities and facilities, particularly during the construction of new projects. For example, in the plan for 1367, the Bana'i Construction Unit has been given contracts exceeding its capacity. The plan, which exceeds the production capacity of the Bana'i Construction Unit, is worrisome because the unit is currently responsible for a number of projects within the framework of cooperation programs with the Soviet Union and other friendly countries. These projects include three schools for the Watan nursery, a radio and television complex, a parking lot, two poultry farms, and other important projects.

The Ministry of Construction Affairs should, in a short period of time, adopt specific measures to implement construction plans and commission development projects during the year 1367. The Ministries of Agriculture and Land Reform and Light Industries and Foodstuffs should complete the technical documents for projects included in their plan and sign their contracts with construction firms. It should be said that unfortunately the effective utilization of the grants-in-aid which arrive in accordance with direct cooperation between the provinces of the Republic of Afghanistan and the oblasts and republics of the Soviet Union have not been fully reflected in the plan. These obvious shortcomings in the Department for Direct Cooperation, and provincial executive committees, and the State Planning Committee should be removed.

The executive committees of the local councils, with the cooperation of relevant ministries and departments, should utilize all potential and facilities in order to fulfill the planned targets in construction and commission provincial social projects. Private sector construction firms should be extensively solicited in such cases. Also in case of need, the construction of such projects should be accomplished in the [word indistinct] traditional manner. The practice of the current year has exposed serious shortcomings in statistical reporting especially about provincial projects. The Central Statistical Department along with ministries, departments, and local organs should in time organize the collection of statistics and draw necessary conclusions from them.

It should be stated that correct analysis has been made in the report of the State Planning Committee. Tasks for 1367 toward the growth of the national economy have been outlined. However, it is worth mentioning that in order to arrive at the stated aims, the conditions of savings, the reduction of unproductive expenses, fuel, and other material reserves, and the reduction in losses during transport and storage should be observed. This puts special responsibility for the rational and economic utilization of resources before the ministries, departments, and the executive committees of the councils of people representatives, and demands from them intensificied savings.

Also goods that have been received from direct cooperation and grants-in-aid should be effectively utilization. The Department of Direct Cooperation and the council of distribution of the gratis goods and the Permanent Commission of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers in transport affairs should pay serious attention to the timely transport of the aforementioned materials and eliminate shortcomings in their transport

and distribution. The transport of goods by the Ministry of Transport and other ministries and departments who have transport means, should be considerably improved.

While discussing and assessing the planned indices of 1367 it should be remembered that the major link in realizing our plans is the work collectives of our enterprises and establishments. Therefore, ministries and departments should pay serious attention to the correct and precise organization of work in enterprises as one of the major factors of effective advancement in the production process. This prepares the ground for economic utilization from all material, financial, and human resources, and most important of all, the ground for maximum utilization of work time as a result of which the production costs and work returns grow and production increases.

Presently we have in our possession legal standard documents necessary for the improvement of the preliminary and practical bases for work organization on the country level. Observation and the realization of the norms and principles of the labor law and the bills and legal standard documents emanating from them, in which the fundamental aspects of the organization of work have been enshrined, could become reliable methodic guidelines to better organize the production process, enhance its effectiveness, and realize planned indices in all branches of the national economy. The planned tasks should be taken to production establishments and work should begin from the first days of the new year, that is 1367, for their realization.

The report presented by Muhammad Kabir, minister of finance, in connection with the decisive realization of the state budget during 1365, the analysis of its realization during 1366, and the draft budget for 1367 is indicative of the fact that specific work by the Ministry of Finance, ministries, departments, and the executive committees of the Council of Representatives committees has been carried out to increase state income and to finance great socioeconomic measures to enhance the standard of living of the people. In this year's budget, considerable allocations were made toward implementing the policy of national reconciliation. This year taxation privileges have been accepted for those who have returned home from abroad and for those residing in remote places in the country. The salaries of a number of categories of workers and staff have been increased, and a number of other steps have been taken. All these require that additional financial sources be found during the current year.

At the same time, assessments relating to the year's budget show that it has been implemented more intensely. There were shortcomings and problems stemming from objective reasons as well as some caused by shortcomings in the work of some ministries and departments in the untimely execution of budgetary tasks and in complete observation of the principle of saving expenses. To implement the tasks concerning state revenues and to reduce expenditures that are not of primary importance, Resolution No. 277, dated 30 December 1987, was approved by the Council of Ministers. The steps envisaged in this resolution helped to a certain extent in implementing the tasks concerning income and reducing expenditures.

It should be remembered that some of the previous problems will also be transferred to the coming year. One of these problems is existing defects in the supply of granted goods, including those involving military trade. The ministries of trade, defense, internal affairs, and state security should considerably improve their work in this regard and transfer on time their income to the state budget. The Ministry of Finance should intensify work to prevent greater reductions in taxes and revenues and reductions in loans to enterprises, establishments, and private individuals. State budget reserves and revenues exist for this. The draft state budget plan for the year envisages indices of growth in the national economy and social measures that have been considered in the country's draft socioeconomic development plan.

I would like to point out that despite objective problems emanating from budgetary revenue waste totalling more than 6 billion afghanis, due to the reduction in the supply of natural gas, the growth in state revenues from internal resources is put at 12 percent compared with the assessment for 1366 with 8 percent from foreign aid. For the first time, voluntary loans for the purpose of reviving the destroyed national economy areas—an amount of money that is presently small—has been added to the budget for 1367.

The state has pinned great hopes on obtaining voluntary state loans for the growth and development of the national economy. It is necessary for this economic step to be transformed into a good example for the mobilization of all strata of citizens—workers, staff, peasants, artisans, intellectuals, private investors, and traders—in the cause of reviving the economy destroyed in war, and in reviving mosques, schools, and public health centers. The organization and execution of this important voluntary measure demands great work from the Ministry of Finance, the Bank of Afghanistan, other ministries, departments, and social organizations.

State expenditures for 1367, notwithstanding the adoption of additional measures to achieve savings in the state budget, are increasing at a rate of 18.2 percent. This is more than the previous growth of 8 percent. Additional expenditures to financially maintain the ministries, departments, and the newly formed administrative units is included in the draft budget. More expenses are foreseen for 1367 compared to 1366 in order to meet material and financial assistance to the returnees, pay retirement salaries and assistance to the families of the martyrs and the disabled. The volume of loan payments to various countries has been considered, as has the payment of coupons.

For the first time in our country's history, expenses for maintaining material assistance to the families whose children are in schools have been included. The 1367 budget allocates the free distribution of school uniforms and teaching materials to students, in addition to the maintenance of school children in terms of free breakfasts and increases in pocket money for them. To meet these expenses more than 3 billion afghanis have been included in the state budget.

The ministers, heads of departments, and chairmen of committees of peoples representatives must personally give serious attention to savings and attracting internal resources to increase budget revenues. During the last 2 years, on test bases, local budgets—first in Kabul and during the current year in another 5 provinces—have been drafted and prepared. We should see what results we have achieved. In our opinion, this experiment was successful.

In the draft budget for 1367, local budgets for all 29 provinces, Kabul, and the Khowst District, totaling over 4 billion afghanis, have been included. Under the present conditions the local organs of state power and administration play a considerable role in organizing and establishing production forces, and in implementing the party and state policy on national reconciliation. Therefore, the development of a system of local budgets is a process with political and economic importance, facililtating possibilities for the government to seize planned material [word indistinct] broaden authority, and strengthen the material and financial base of the new administrative organs in the provinces, districts, subdistricts, and villages.

We positively assess the work of the Ministry of Finance and provincial organs in drafting and preparing local budgets for 1367 and want the organs of power to pay serious attention to the growth of local budget revenues. In 1367 the Ministry of Finance, the Department of Local Organ Affairs, and the provincial council representatives executive committees must work to fix the structure of taxes and local production development. They should define the authorities of the government and the local organs of power in utilizing this structure and should take it into consideration in the future in local budget revenues. Before us is the great task of methodically preparing and approving the authorities of the local organs of power in financial matters, and the expansion and organization of their material and financial base. The gradual development of the local budget system is a work of great socioeconomic importance. The fate of state power in the localities depends on the operational and rational execution of the realization of this work.

The low level of effectiveness of the country's economic activity, particularly in the state sector, is of serious concern to us. The total number of state enterprises that work under conditions lacking self-sufficiency is 24 enterprises—that is 24.7 percent—and they belong to six ministries: the Transport Ministry, 12; the Ministry of Light Industries and Foodstuff, 4; the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reform, 5; the Ministry of Electrical Energy, 1; the Ministry of Construction, 1; and the Ministry of Mines and Industries, 1. The economic services and the leadership of the relevant enterprises are weak in enhancing their work for profit. The major reasons for the lack of self-sufficiency are incomplete utilization of production capacity, high production prices, and shortcomings in pricing and the affairs of these enterprises.

Enterprises belonging to the Ministry of Light Industries and Foodstuff are facing great difficulties in obtaining raw materials including wool, cotton, and beets, depsite the fact that cotton and wool, which are purchased inside the country, are exported abroad for commercial purposes. The State Planning Committee, the Ministry of Commerce, and the Ministry of Light Industries and Foodstuff must take urgent measures to eliminate these negative phenomena.

The leadership of the Ministry of Transport attributes the lack of self-sufficiency of its establishments to the existence of long-term low tariffs for goods transport. The government considered objective factors and twice increased the tariffs on transporting goods. However, simultaneously with that the long-term halt of loaded transport vehicles and the evacuation of goods, stoppages on the highways, the transport of goods only in one direction, and the defective utilization of the [word indistinct] of work, has once again been transformed into the reason for a lack of self-sufficiency in motor transport. Due to these results, it is clear that low tariffs for transportation is not the major reason and thus major factors in the organization of enterprises' work should be sought.

The heads of a number of ministries and departments have become used to the notion that the majority of state enterprises are receiving considerable subsidies from the state budget due to their wastefulness. They do not take any measures to improve their work. One out of every four state enterprises is not self-sufficient. This situation should no longer be tolerated. Therefore, all enterprises should pass to complete self-sufficiency and measures should thus be taken toward this goal. This is, of course, not a new matter. The Ministry of Finance, other ministries, state departments, the State Planning Committee, and the Bank of Afghanistan should pay attention to this matter. They should improve the system of reciprocal relations with the budget and maintain their payments using funds obtained through profits.

They should give up the practice of completely deducting surplus benefits of enterprises and include them in the income received by work collectives. This task is, in fact, an economic account and will consolidate the whole economy. There are formidable issues concentrated in pricing affairs, too. The prices that are being set in the capital remain behind the market situation, and most enterprises are trading at a loss. Despite the fact that their products are favored by the market, they are

operating at a loss. No longer can we compromise with such a situation. In this area, too, other methods of setting prices on enterprises' products and services carried out for private companies and individuals should be sought.

In competing with the private sector, the task of setting prices on products and services must be carried out in such a manner as to assist the successful economic growth of every enterprise. Taking the opportunity and in consideration of the fact that a number of provincial governors are taking part in today's Council of Ministers session, allow me briefly to present some information on the activities of the local organs of state power.

In order to bring about facilities and special administrative orders, improve relations between the capital and local organs in the localities, promote systematic and regular growth in various areas of social life and economic development, and enhance the authority, credit, and competence of the provincial delegate councils and their executive committees as organs elected by the people, the Council of Ministers, in Resolutions No. 169, dated 29 September 1987 and No. 134, dated 21 July 1987, approved a new organizational structure for provincial executive committees.

The new structure is based on democratic centralization. The system of dual allegiance forms its other fundamental pillar. This is an allegiance of the provincial departments to the provincial executive committees from the viewpoint of plan and budget, the appointment and removal of cadres, and the execution and control of daily affairs, and an allegiance of the provincial departments to a ministry or central department in Kabul from the viewpoint of practical methodic tasks, regulating general policy, and training and completing professional cadres. In order to create a single and specific system for the removal and appointment of cadres and for the creation of facilities and specific order, the Council of Ministers, in Resolution No. 95, dated 9 June 1987, passed specific responsibilities to the provincial executive committees.

The provincial executive committees have the authority to oppoint or dismiss cadres up to the third rank. Moreover, authority for the oppointment or dismissal of district and subdistrict governors is being allotted to the provincial executive committees. In most provinces, the system of dual allegiance has been secured. The assessment of the implementation of the new organizational structure, based on democratic centralizaton and the dual allegiance system, reveals that a new order has taken shape in the provinces. Relations have been improved between the capital and local organs in the localities, dispersion has been prevented in this respect, and administrative centralization has taken shape in the form of executive committees, which have enhanced the role and authority of the provincial executive committees.

It should be mentioned that planning commissions, within the framework of the provincial executive committees, have been created for the purpose of assessing and methodically controlling planning work in the provinces. In order to secure the authority of these commissions, those in charge are being appointed first deputy governors. These commissions, at the provincial level, enjoy a noticeable importance. In the event these commissions manage to discharge their duties as the planning organs of the provinces, in a short time further possibilities will be provided for the solution of problems and for improving the economic situation in the provinces. It should be mentioned that during the current year specific tasks have been carried out in the provinces, both by the provincial executive committees and by the ministries and central departments. The socioeconomic development plan for the provinces has been carried out to various degrees and a number of second-phase projects were commissioned.

The nature of the provincial planning commissions' activities was discussed a while ago in the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, and necessary decisions were taken in order to improve these activities. The creation of local organs of state power and administration in the country and their transformation into local organs of people's power, and the people's participation through these organs, in consolidating people's sovereignty, is increasing day by day. This process enjoys the support of the majority of the people's masses. With the declaration of the national reconciliation policy, the issue of the participation of all forces involved in the war and the representatives of the various strata and classes of society in the coalition sovereignty from the village level to higher levels, came under discussion. This fact, of course, creates the possibility for state sovereignty to be established at all levels in the country and for public order to be maintained in society.

The election process of the local organs of state power and administration and the inclusion of a considerable number of the opposition—one from among the opposition or the returnees, one from every four people—and the election of more than 76 percent of nonparty people in the composition of the executive committees have prepared the necessary conditions for the consolidation and creation of coalition administrations in the localities. This process has, in practice, accelerated the creation of nuclei for a coalition government. The signing of protocols with armed bands in connection with ceasing the fighting in localities and liberating villages in a peaceful manner, and appointing 13 nonparty provincial governors, seven of whom are from among former opposition forces, has exerted considerable influence in increasing people's confidence toward people's sovereignty and the maintenence of security in the localities. Fifty percent of district and subdistrict governors elected in 193 districts and subdistricts are nonparty people.

During the current year [ending 20 March 1988], elections to the local organs have been organized in 40 districts, 28 subdistricts, 7 cities, 4 wards, and 4,461

villages, where a total of 1,168 councils and executive committees have been created, with elected delegates totalling 11,056. Also during the current year, in light of the national reconciliation policy, coalition councils have been formed in 14 districts and 9 subdistricts, with a total of 376 people from among the returnees and 2,096 members of the opposition included in their executive committees. At present, 148 district and 68 subdistricts, and all cities and wards are under the control of the state. More than 50 percent of the villages have been reactivated and around 2,500 of these through peaceful means.

Although the basic mechanism and indices [word indistinct] (?concerning) the formation of coalition councils, committees, and administrations, have been organized and put at the disposal of responsible organs, shortcomings still exist in the expansion and popularization of coalition administrations at all lower and higher levels. So far, work for the creation of coalition administrations has not been transformed into a system. The provincial executive committees still have not realized the sharing of power with the opposition forces as they should. They have paid little attention to the creation of nuclei for coalition administrations at the village, subdistrict, and district levels.

Contacts with the opposition groups to join them to state sovereignty and the signing of protocols with them is weak. We have not fully utilized the possibilities and the role of personalities in ceasing the armed activities by opposition groups. Necessary use has not been made of the possibilities of the opposition groups in the localities to reactivate administrative units and villages outside the control of the government. It is necesary to act with courage, precision, and awarness in carrying out these tasks.

One of the main issues in the process of the national reconciliation policy is the issue of the return of refugees. Specific work has been done in this regard and positive gains have been achieved. In order to arrange and organize the returnees' affairs and to welcome them, 22 border guest centers, 22 peace guesthouses, and 17 peace townships have been created. Twenty-nine provinces, Khowst major district, and Kabul city have established direct relations with the republics, oblasts, and cities of the Soviet Union. Cooperation protocols worth 70 billion rubles have been concluded so far. The provincial planning commissions must make effective and all-round utilization of these possibilities and the assistance provided by direct cooperation with the republics and oblasts of the Soviet Union in order to complete the implementation of socioeconomic development plans.

Esteemed comrades:

By designing the socioeconomic development plan and government budget for 1988-89, we put before us formidable duties. However, if all available possibilities are not being utilized and work is not being organized in a practical and careful manner, the determination of objectives and duties alone is not sufficient. Our major duties start from this very day, which specifies the envisaged tasks in the plan and budget for relevant organs and seeks ways to realize them. We can express satisfaction that the members of government will use all their efforts in order to implement the duties envisaged in the plan and government budget for 1988-89. This by itself will be a specific part in the task of implementing the national reconciliation policy in the country.

Thank you.

Bangladesh

MP's Take Oath Amid Tight Police Security

BK201332 Hong Kong AFP in English 1321 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Dhaka, March 20 (AFP)—Newly elected Bangladeshi MP's were sworn in Sunday amid tight police security, witnesses and the official BSS news agency reported here. Witnesses said police were checking vehicles and identification of visitors on all the approach roads to Parliament, while security had been tightened inside the building.

Names of 299 of the 300-member parliament elected in controversial March 3 polls were announced by the Election Commission Saturday. Re-polling in one constituency where a candidate was murdered last month will be held next month. The latest count shows that President Hussain Mohammad Ershad's ruling Jatiya Party has taken 251 seats, leaving 18 for the combined opposition party (COP) led by Abdur Rab, three for a faction of the radical JSD [Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal—Nationalist Socialist Party], two for the Freedom Party and 25 for the independents.

BSS news agency said Speaker Shamsul Huda Chowdhury of the outgoing Parliament administered the oath to ruling party members including Prime Minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and four women MP's. However, the COP, Freedom Party and independent members were not present and are expected to take oath later this week, parliamentary sources said. Opposition parties including the Bangladesh Nationalist Party of Begum Khaleda Zia and Awami League of Sheikh Hasina, both former ruling parties, had boycotted the March 3 elections which were marred by violence and allegations of massive fraud. No date for the new session of Parliament has yet been announced.

India

Envoy to U.S. Refutes Report on Nuclear Weapons

BK211554 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1543 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The Indian ambassador to the United States, Mr P.K. Kaul, has dismissed as a figment of imagination a Western news agency report that India possess 20 or

more nuclear bombs. UPI, quoting former National Security Council members and congressional staff, reported on Sunday that India has assembled a handful of highly sophisticated low-yield atomic bombs that could be delivered at targets by combat aircraft.

Sikhs Launch 'First Rocket Attack' in Punjab

BK221050 Hong Kong AFP in English 1042 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] New Delhi, March 22 (AFP)—Sikh militants launched their first rocket attack on a paramilitary camp in Punjab, while six people died in separate killings, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported Tuesday. About 50 paramilitary troops had a narrow escape when Sikh militants fired two rockets at a makeshift Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in the textile town of Phagwara late Monday, PTI said.

The rockets damaged the walls of a Hindu temple where the troops were camping, but caused no casualties. Security forces launched a search for the attackers after sealing the area, the agency added. It was the first rocket attack by Sikh militants in their five-year-old campaign for a separate Sikh homeland in Punjab, in India's north. At the end of 1987 reports from the Punjab said militants had tested rockets, but had yet to use them in action.

Meanwhile, about six Sikh gunmen stormed a Sikh home in Akbarpura village in Amritsar District late Monday and shot dead a man and his wife, PTI said. The victims' daughter was seriously wounded. Elsewhere in Amritsar District late Monday, Sikh militants shot dead a Sikh, hacked another to death and wounded a third, PTI said. Police shot dead two suspected Sikh separatists who opened fire when asked to stop at a checkpoint in Hoshiarpur District, the agency said. About 520 people have died this year in violence linked to the campaign.

Hindu 'Exodus' From Sikh Violence in Punjab

BK191240 Hong Kong AFP in English 1228 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Gurdaspur, India, March 19 (AFP)—Driven by escalating Sikh separatist attacks and threats of violent death, terrorised Hindus have begun to flee villages in this Punjab district borderying Pakistan, officials said here.

Gurdaspur Deputy Commissioner D.S. Kalha, the district's top civil administrator, said more than 600 Hindus have fled villages in the area, which has a reputation as a hotbed of Sikh militancy, in the past few days. They have headed for havens in neighbouring northern states such as Haryana and Punjab cities, with larger Hindu populations. More than 150 Hindus have also abandoned villages in Amritsar, where officials said the situation was not as "alarming" as in Gurdaspur, whose 1.5 million population is more than 60 percent Sikh.

Gurdaspur District Police Chief J.P. Birdi told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE the administration feared the exodus could snowball into a situation similar to 1986, when some 10,000 Hindus fled separatist violence, mainly from rural areas in Gurdaspur and Amritsar. Sikhs make up about 70 percent of the northern state's rural population. They account for about 54 percent of the estimated 18 million people living in Punjab, where in urban areas the population breakdown is roughly half-Sikh, half-Hindu. Sikh separatists consider Hindus enemies of the Khalsa (Sikh religion).

Some 1,234 people, both Hindus and Sikhs, were killed in violence linked to the Sikh separatist campaign last year. More than 520 have died this year, 63 of them in Gurdaspur District. Fears of mass killings have been fanned by police reports that Sikh militants trained in Pakistan have infiltrated Gurdaspur. India has accused Pakistan of backing the Sikh separatist struggle, a charge rejected by Islamabad.

Mr. Kalha admitted authorities had failed to reassure Hindu residents that they would be protected against separatist attacks, while Mr. Birdi said militant death-threats and extortion had spurred the exodus. Sikh militants have asked Gurdaspur residents to boycott programmes on the the government-owned television network, especially a serial on the Hindu epic "Ramayana," police said. Posters have appeared warning residents of dire consequences if they watched the "Ramayana," currently the most popular serial on television with an 85 percent viewership. Television owners have removed their TV antennae and switched off sets fearing for their lives. Militants have also asked schools to be partial to Sikh children in marking examination papers.

Officials said some 700 paramilitary troops had recently combed 50 of Gurdaspur's nearly 400 villages in a bid to flush out Sikh separatists. Only a handful of arrests were made. More police posts were being opened and patrols beefed up. Village defence committees with ex-soldiers have been formed and equipped with arms and ammunition to staunch the migration of Hindus, officials said.

Akali Dal Leaders Protest Punjab Policy

BK211247 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] In New Delhi today, the Unified Akali Dal tried to take out a procession defying prohibitory orders to protest against the government's policy on Punjab. Police said the party leader, Mr Prakash Singh Badal, and some MP's were arrested along with party workers. They were later released.

Intruder Into Parliament Complex Shot Dead

BK211618 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Parliament was informed today that an intruder into the Parliament complex in New Delhi late last night was shot dead by security forces. He was trying to scale the high iron gates of the complex. The matter is being investigated.

Gandhi Visits Kashmir Avalanche-Hit Areas

BK210855 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, today flew to Kargil and Zanskar in the Ladakh region to see the avalanche-hit areas. He was accompanied by the Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah. According to official sources Mr Rajiv Gandhi visited Leh, Padama, and Kargil. A large number of people were killed in the avalanches in the area recently.

Announces Relief Grants

BK211622 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] The prime minister today announced a grant of 5 lakh rupees from the prime minister's relief fund for the avalanche-hit people in Ladakh. Mr Rajiv Gandhi made the announcement during his visit to the avalanche-hit areas of Kargil and Zanskar today. He made an aerial survey of the affected villages, including Sagoor, Yugoma, and Kharbo, where over 80 people were reported killed in the avalanches.

Addressing a gathering at Padam-Zanskar, the prime minister assured the people that steps will be taken to solve the problems connected with the topographical conditions of the region. He asked the state government to assess the damage so that assistance and compensation schemes can be worked out soon.

4,000 Bus Workers Arrested in Delhi 22 Mar

BK220928 Hong Kong AFP in English 0919 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] New Delhi, March 22 (AFP)—Police arrested about 4,000 striking busmen in the Indian capital Tuesday for breaking a ban on public assemblies, police and witnesses said.

Truckloads of slogan-shouting strikers from the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), India's largest city bus service, drove up to Parliament Street in the city centre and offered themselves for arrest, witnesses said.

Some 43,000 DTC employees, including 23,000 drivers and conductors, launched an indefinite strike Thursday to press demands for more pay and better working conditions. Those held were expected to be released later Tuesday.

Police detained some 5,000 busmen here Monday for breaking the ban on assemblies, but released most of them a few hours later.

Seventeen others were held Monday on rioting charges for smashing windows of private buses which have been running despite the strike. They were still in custody Tuesday.

The DTC management has fired 2,500 workers after declaring the strike illegal.

Police said they could not give exact figures of the numbers still held because senior officers involved had not returned from Tuesday's demonstrations.

Dalai Lama Interviewed on Tibetan Situation

BK190905 Hong Kong AFP in English 0818 GMT 19 Mar 88

[By Yves de Saint-Jacob]

[Terxt] Dharamsala, India, March 19 (AFP)—The Dalai Lama says the only possible way to resolve strife in Tibet is through negotiation with the Chinese Government, as violent resistance would be tantamount to suicide for the Tibetan people. The protest movement should continue, he told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE in an interview this week, but peacefully and with a focus on religion.

The spiritual and temporal leader of Buddhist Tibetans spoke on Thursday, 29 years to the day he fled the Himalayan region after a bloody unsuccessful uprising in Lhasa against Chinese rule.

Anti-Chinese sentiment flared anew last October and again this month, with several lives lost, but the Dalai Lama—who lives in exile in this northern Indian city—has stuck to his call for civil disobedience.

"The basic problem is that Chinese leaders do not understand what is Tibetan history, what really happened after they came, what the majority of Tibetans presently feel or think," he said. "The only way to make them aware of the situation is for the people inside Tibet to express grievances," he added, speaking in his sitting room in the bright maroon robe that distinguishes Tibetan Buddhist monks.

Asked what sort of civil disobedience could be used, the Dalai Lama replied: "I mean prayer meetings, gatherings of monks and some kind of meditation in order to express grievances. Always non-violent."

He said last October's congress of the Chinese Communist Party—which named Zhao Ziyang as general secretary—had seen "a younger generation, comparatively more open-minded liberal leaders" take important positions.

"These are encouraging signs," he said, and "of course" it was still possible to reach an agreement with Beijing, which secured Tibet in 1951 to assert China's centuries-old claim to the region.

"The only possible way is to talk, to discuss. It takes time. It needs more patience. But our stand is reason and justice—not force.

"If we follow a violent way, it will be easier for the Chinese to crush our national movement. Following violent practice would be almost like suicide for the Tibetan people."

The Dalai Lama ruled out any personal visit soon to Tibet or Beijing. "I don't think there would be any benefit from a visit under present circumstances," he said.

The Dalai Lama has not returned to Tibet since he left in 1959 at age 23. But since its opening to the outside world in 1980, several delegations have met with important Chinese leaders in his name.

The appeal to non-violence and the pursuit of dialogue with Beijing are two themes the Dalai Lama has maintained over the years. His latest statements reaffirmed this position at a time when many Tibetans have been showing growing impatience with peaceful resistance.

On March 11 the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, set up by the Dalai Lama, took the offensive, saying: "Continuing Chinese intransigence to the aspirations of the Tibetan people is making the Tibetan people realize there is no alternative to violence and terrorism, which none of us want."

On the other hand the Dalai Lama has taken care since the end of the 1960's to "leave his options open," according to an expression of his entourage, in regards to the future status of Tibet.

While posters in Dharamsala and New Delhi cry "independence," the Dalai Lama does not use the word, speaking instead of "liberty" and "political rights."

Lab Develops Heavy Alloy for Tank Warfare

BK200947 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Scientists of the Defense Metallurgical Research Laboratory [DMRL], Hyderabad, have developed a special heavy alloy composition core required for modern antitank warfare. The director of the research laboratory told newsmen that the bulk production technology for the alloy has already been established. A manufacturing unit is being set up in Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu for this purpose. Another notable achievement has been development of technology for producing titanium alloy used in MiG aircraft. DMRL scientists have also achieved success in complete indigenization of production of critical components like aircraft brake pads.

Iran

Statement on U.S. Central American Policy

LD211305 Tehran IRNA in English 1259 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA—The Foreign Ministry released a statement here Monday, strongly condemning the U.S. for its interference in the internal affairs of Latin American countries, particularly Nicaragua and Panama. The statement also called on international bodies to denounce the U.S. for its military intervention and threats against the independence and territorial integrity of Nicaragua and Panama. While the oppressed nations of the world are struggling to achieve independence and freedom, colonial powers are conspiring against liberation movements and are meddling in the internal affairs of independent countries, it said. White House policy-makers by landing two well-equipped military divisions in Honduras have actually taken another step toward supporting Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries, a measure tantamount to declaration of war against the oppressed nation of Nicaragua, it said.

The Foreign Ministry statement cited economic and political pressure exerted on Panama by Washington in a bid to topple the Panamanian Government and replace it with a puppet regime, as another glaring example of such interference. The statement once again castigated the U.S. for its military threats against the independence and territorial integrity of Nicaragua and for its meddlings in Panama's internal affairs.

Majlis Speaker Interviewed on 'Val-Farj-10'

NC201712 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1752 GMT 19 Mar 88

["Exclusive" interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani by unidentified Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran correspondent in Tehran on 19 March—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the fighting Islamic forces made extensive advances in the past few days into Iraqi territory. Could you please give us your assessment of the latest situation regarding our forces in the (?present operations) and in light of the results of the "Val-Fajr-10," "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-3," and "Zafar-7" operations?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The "Val-Fajr-10" operations were a very effective, serious, and important step in the course of the war. Of course, "Zafar-7" and "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-3" were interrelated, complementary. It is possible that these operations would not have taken place at this time, during these last few days of the year. The reason they did take place and what motivated the operations was the mischief of the Iraqi Ba'thists in attacking the cities, the escalation of the war of cities, and the political trouble caused by the UN Security Council and by Iraq's supporters in their use of psychological warfare in the form of an arms embargo, and other psychologically harassing tactics. They did this to prove that Iran could not muster the manpower for an attack, that it does not have the power to continue attacks, and that it could not survive this (?ridiculous)

embargo brought about by U.S. pressure. They also wished to ascertain whether the embargo would be effective. We decided that a practical response should be given right now.

Of course, all these results and all the equipping of forces were not achieved merely on the recommendations of the Supreme Council for War Support; that process of dispatching forces continues. This is just one chapter from the book about the course of the war in history. It seems that these operations are very important, and from certain aspects, they have immense importance. At the battlefield, it can be seen that one of the two sides from which our fighters came is dominated by high, snow-covered mountains, which they had to cross. This crossing, under normal conditions, is very difficult for troops in combat; it is even more difficult during the winter and when it covered with snow. The peaks we crossed are 2,200 meters high and the battlefield is 500 meters high. In other words, the (Dasht-e Zur) area is 500 meters above sea level, and the mountains are 2,200 meters high. An area 1,700 meters high was traversed by tanks, and war materiel was brought to the center of this area. This was a difficult task and was undertaken within the observation range of the enemy. It had hideouts in many areas.

Regarding the southern part of the area, crossing of the turbulent river was done in the worst stormy condition. At times, the river washed away huge bridges. The battlefield itself was a vast area with conditions that made a blitzkrieg extremely difficult. If you look at the region, it resembles the area between Tehran and Karaj or the area between Alborz and Shahryar. In most cases, there were many rivers, and the area was surrounded by enemy lines, hideouts, bases, checkposts, sandbarriers, and military fortifications. Our forces crossed these barricades with great force and entered the battlefield. They were able to conquer, besiege, and carry out mopping up operations in the region very quickly. It was only today, 4 or 5 days after the operations, that a number of Iraqi forces were discovered in the swamps, forests, villages, crevices, and paths of the mountains, awaiting assistance. They were the ones who wished to resist.

From the military point of view, the operations were of supreme importance and will be explained to the people with the help of a map. As for political gains, they are also very important in view of the fact that the enemy used propaganda to show the world that the war has reached an impasse and that we could not attain military victory. For the supporters of Saddam, the ignorant shaykhs of the Arabian Peninsula, who had been (?flattered) so they might provide greater assistance, this blow proved very effective. Saddam has repeatedly said in the past few days that they are in an excellent defensive position and he promised his people that he would not permit even an inch of Iraqi territory to be occupied by the Iranians. The assessment by the military observers was similar. This new impudence on the part of the Russians, who had permitted these missiles to be used against us, was based on the hope for Saddam's salvation; otherwise, they would not have taken this risk. This will definitely affect our future relations and, in any case, our people will never forget the results of this new impudence.

From the political standpoint, the attacks have a great significance. The gains are enormous. First of all, the region we have acquired is of strategic importance, and I cannot talk much about it. The Iraqis themselves are aware of what has befallen them, but the results will emerge later. The blow the Iraqi Army has suffered is a serious one and has made them so confused that they have embarked on strange contradictions. In the first days after the blow, they did not say anything, and we ourselves did not announce anything until 2 days later when the results had been assessed. Iraq also said nothing. That a country would say nothing about the territory it lost is not so strange considering the kind of government at the helm!

Later, when they wished to speak, we announced it and they denied it outright. They began saying strange things, which will be ridiculed later in history. They said we did not have any military forces in that region. If you speak the truth, what will you tell your people? How can you say that you did not have troops in that area? Why would they not be in such an important military area? What kind of defense of the country is this? Of course it is a lie! Now the world sees we have taken more than 4,000 prisoners, and this figure is increasing. Thousands hve been wounded and killed and, as the area is vast, we cannot give all the details. In addition, there were many who were killed behind the fronts by artillery fire. Obviously, their numbers are great as that is the area we fired upon from all directions, as we did in Al-Faw. That makes it very dangerous for them.

Where did all the booty seized come from? Nearly 700 tanks and APCs were either destroyed or captured, of which approximately 200 are intact. The rest have been destroyed. About 2,000 armored carriers were seized and 80 cannons were taken intact. This is not an easy task as the cannons are in the rear. When the enemy flees, he destroys his cannons or takes them with him. Cannons are not in the frontlines. The point is that for us to capture 80 of them there must have been at least double that amount of artillery! That means there must have been at least 200, 170, or 180 cannons, in addition to mortar launchers, katyushas, minikatyushas, and other weapons. The area was a military one, and the people of the city were surrounded by military personnel. The military lines of the Iraqis were very strong. It could not have been otherwise because it is the gateway to Iraq. It is a vital region, and this military disaster which has befallen Iraq and the fact that they were proved liars when they had boasted that they could defend themselves have dealt a great blow to their morale.

This victory was also necessary for our people as they were in a state of expectation. Of course, we normally carry out operations under favorable conditions, as we do not wish to embark on mere military adventurism, and we prefer to take into account the repercussions of any operations. We do not act in haste, but the conditions imposed on us necessitated that we carry out these operations earlier than scheduled.

Another achievement was that we recaptured the city of Nowsud. Nowsud is a beautiful border city, which has been very important since our revolution. The Iraqis had taken the area, given it to the counterrevolutionaries, and protected it with their artillery. It had become a center for trouble in Kordestan in general. The Komelehs, the Democrats [as heard], the Rastegari [Kurdish tribe] were always fomenting trouble there. They helped Iraq in the initial operations and fought against our forces. With one blow they surrendered, and we took the city; about 700 to 800 of them are now in prisons. This was a major blow to them.

In these operations, there was cooperation between us and the Iraqi forces, including the Supreme Assembly of the Iraqi Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] and the pro-Iranian Kurdish factions, such as the Democrats, the KDP members, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the Socialists, the Muslim followers of Islamic ideology, and the peshmerga. They all cooperated and this proved a valuable experience for military operations in Iraq in the future. On the whole, as far as the political, psychological, military, and economic aspects are concerned, it was a most valuable operation for us, while for Iraq it was shattering.

[Correspondent] The year 1366 [21 March 1987 to 20 March 1988] may be termed a year in which we saw a relatively dynamic trend in the war, characterized by the war of the cities toward the end of the year, which resulted in the liberation of some Iraqi cities with the help of the Iraqi people, as you just mentioned. Now that we are on the threshold of the new year, could you tell us what you predict for 1367?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] In view of the foundation we have laid in the war in the past year, and with the recommendations of the Supreme Council for War Support, volunteers have registered and military preparations have taken place regarding the production, purchase of the necessary war equipment, and other plans and programs prepared by the military commanders. These preliminaries, whether psychological or political, which are necessary to warn the world, were carried out, and I can say that an excellent end to the past year is in itself an excellent beginning to the new one.

The past year was characterized by the vast moves for a psychological war against us by the world oppressors, aimed at frightening us out of the arena. The events in the Persian Gulf are an example. These recent moves along with their propaganda, which were coordinated with their mischief-making, were formulated for this purpose alone. Even now after we inflicted this blow and conducted major and historic operations, the foreign radios and mass media of the world oppressors dwell primarily and in detail on the issues of missiles and the war of cities, and then they make only a slight reference to the war operations on the battlefronts!

I can foresee that with this trend—in which volunteers have registered and will go to the fronts when required—we will always have an active presence at the fronts. Iraq's speedy decline has begun. We will be able to conduct the war in such a way that the enemies of Islam and Saddam's supporters will understand the path they have chosen is wrong, and that they should come to their senses soon and accept the correct path we have placed before them.

[Correspondent] The first long-range missile manufactured by the Islamic Republic of Iran's Air Force has been fired at the Iraqi city of Al-'Amarah. Could you please tell us what effect it will have on the war and how its use will be coordinated with the use of missiles by the IRGC Ground Forces, so it is clear to the people.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] It is the same missile whose tests were recently announced by the Defense Ministry. Some of these missiles have been given to the Air Force and other forces. The most important attribute of this missile is that it has entered the war. It has entered the warfronts and has been assessed as practical. In general, we can now rely on our missile industry as far as production and assembly are concerned. Of course, a war cannot be fought with missiles alone. A war requires organized forces, infantry in particular, especially in the battefields. A missile is a deterrent or a harassing device. Despite our massive missile strength, if the Iraqis did not attack our residential areas, we would not have use our missiles. For us, the missiles have a deterrent role, and we can depend on various types of missiles.

[Correspondent] When missiles have been employed, Iraq has been the greater loser. The missiles used by Iran in self-defense have been more effective than the ones used by Iraq against our cities. Foreign news agencies have said that Iraq's missile attacks have made the Iranian people more determined to continue the war until victory. What is your opinion? Why did Iraq resume missile attacks for the second time in the past few days despite this?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I think that Tariq 'Aziz and his associates do not know the fate of their missiles in Tehran. If they knew, they might have fired them earlier, or in truth, they may have had a different fate. We do not consider it prudent to reveal what happened to their long-range missiles in Tehran. If they had some spying elements in Tehran, they would have understood that this week, during Friday prayers last week, and in earlier weeks, the people at the congregation saw the fragments

of the missiles we had exploded in mid-air, and they shouted slogans and thanked God. If they had even some sense, they would have understood the other issues as well.

The well-coordinated propaganda by the world oppressors' mass media deceives the Iraqis repeatedly, particularly when they are told that Tehran has been evacuated and the people have fled. The hypocrites [Monafeqin-e Khalq] who have been assigned to report from here give false reports that there were protests in parts of Tehran. These people plunge the Iraqis into ignorance, but they gradually see the truth. As we announced earlier and repeated at the Friday prayers, these missiles cannot have any effect on the war.

The missiles may serve to make our people and our fighters more determined. They are also a manifestation of Saddam's bestiality. As soon as he found some missiles that could hit Tehran, he embarked on an extensive war of the cities. In recent stages, Saddam's savagery became even more apparent, and the most despicable example was Halabjah. The scene of the chemical bombing of the people of Halabjah is heart-wrenching. How can a country be in the hands of a man willing to wreak such mischief on his own people! Thousands were martyred or wounded by chemical bombs, and it is not known how it will affect their health later, that is, whether the wounded ones will ever regain their health.

Their crime was that they did not flee when the Iranian forces entered the area and instead joined our fighters. You must have seen in the films how they greeted our forces when they entered the area and how they welcomed them as their compatriots. This angered the Iraqis. It also seemed very interesting to us that the people of Iraq, whose government has been at war with us for the past 8 years, should be so friendly with us. They are our neighbors. If we had fired bullets at them, they would have been angry with us. Then they would not have welcomed us in this manner and slaughtered sheep for us. Instead they shouted slogans for us.

Saddam, the demented, warped, mischief-making, and vicious ruler, treated his people in such a manner that he destroyed a city with hundreds of bombs—a city for whose liberation we did not have to shoot a single bullet. He bombed it to take revenge on his own people. What kind of a government is this? You asked why he resumed the war of cities. First of all, he thought he had stumbled on a new tactic, that a missile can reach Tehran. He did not know what effect it had on Tehran and what would be the fate of the missile there. This was the fallacious idea given to him by his supporters, who gave him the missiles. They were mistaken about us. They thought that with this pressure, they could force us to compromise, but, it actually had the opposite effect. What they did not consider possible occurred. Our fighters proved that whenever the mischief-making of the Iraqis or our other enemies increases, our fighters take drastic action, which frustrates them, and this will be the pattern in the future as well.

[Correspondent] Recently, the UN secretary general expressed his wish to hold talks for ending the war of the cities. What is the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in this regard, and what, in your opinion, would be the outcome of these talks?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Our position is to end the war of cities. We hate the war of the cities. Our treatment of the people of Halabjah is ample proof of this. Saddam bombed them, but we moved them out of the battlefields and treated them. Now they are enjoying our hospitality in our camps. We are doing whatever we can to mitigate their misery. Naturally, we do not want people to be hurt, whether they are our people or theirs. However, we are forced to be prepared, so whenever Saddam embarks on mischief, we can continue our deterrent measures, which we always announce in advance to warn them to evacuate the cities and not be hurt. We have given a positive response to the UN secretary general's invitation for talks in this regard and we reiterate it.

I am not optimistic about the outcome of these talks, since they [as heard] do not want the war to end in a just manner. I think the UN secretary general is personally in favor of this, but they will not permit him to do anything in this regard. The (?plan he had proposed) would be acceptable if Iraq had been declared the aggressor. Then the war would be ending. However, they did not permit the UN secretary general to do his job.

I have the best intentions toward the secretary general, but I know that the oppressors of the East and West, the regional reactionaries, and the Zionists do not want the war to end in a just manner and do not want the Islamic Republic's rights to be vindicated. We cannot retreat even one step without the chastisement of the aggressor. We cannot terminate the war until we gain the rights of our nation and those of the Iraqi nation. Now, we have dealt this blow and, contrary to their expectations, we have proved our strength. Perhaps, this might prove effective at this stage in the proposed talks.

[Correspondent] As a befitting end to the interview, and as we are on the threshold of the New Year, what message would you like to give, as a New Year's gift, to the people and the fighters?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The fighters have given us and the people a gift. Our people are far ahead of us in their thinking. It is not necessary to give a message, but I must thank these people for understanding these situations and acting according to the needs of the hour in a most suitable manner. We believe that victory is the product of resistance, and without it no one can attain victory. Our nation has understood this point and should remain steadfast on its chosen path. To our youth, I will repeat

the imam's latest decree. As he said, youth should go to the fronts. I wish to state that if the fronts remain replete with trained forces as they are now, our nation will witness similar proud moments at appropriate junctures. God willing, our enemies will be frustrated in their machinations, which will be foiled by our continued operations.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I wish you success, God willing.

Musavi, Khamene'i Exchange New Year Greetings

LD211526 Tehran IRNA in English 1203 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA—Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi along with his deputies and cabinet ministers met President 'Ali Khamene'i here Monday and congratulated him on the occasion of the solar Hejira year, 1367. President Khamene'i, too, felicitated the visitors on the start of the new year and wished them success in rendering service to Iran's Muslim people.

Musavi Visits 'Val-Farj-10' Operations Area

LD201740 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Central News Unit correspondent's report from the "Val-Farj-10" operational theater]

[Text] Following the victories in the "Val-Fajr-10" operation and the liberation of a vast portion of Al-Sulaymaniyah Province in Iraq, Prime Minister Musavi went to the operational theater in the early hours of the new year. He met with the victory-creating and combative fighters, and inspected the liberated towns and areas. During the inspection which lasted 5 hours, the prime minister attended a session with IRGC Commander Mohsen Rezai'e and a number of operational commanders and was briefed on the advance of the fighters and the liberation of Halabjah, Khurmal, and Dujaylah.

In this session, the operational commanders submitted reports on the situation in the region, the advance of the fighters, and the military effects of the operation, including the blocking of the entry routes into Iran of counterrevolutionary minigroups. Then, together with his entourage, the prime minister inspected the liberated townships and villages, which were subjected to the severest chemical attacks over the past few days, resulting in the martyrdom of innocent and defenseless people. The prime minister later inspected Iraqi refugee camps in Kordestan Province.

Views Significance of Victory

NC220955 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1630 GMT 21 Mar 88

[Text] Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi, who visited the "Val-Fajr-10" operational theater to meet with the fighters of Islam and see their recent conquests, gave an interview to our correspondent and answered his questions.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr Musavi, in the last days of 1366 [year ending 20 March 1988] the fighters of Islam carried out a series of victorious operations and succeeded in liberating a large part of Iraq's Al-Sulaymaniyah Province. Please comment on the political and military significance of the occupation of this territory and tell us how helpful it will be to victory in future operations.

[Musavi] In the name of God, the almighty, the compassionate. I wish to congratulate our dear nation on the New Year as well as on the fresh victories our dear fighters have given our nation. These victories were actually a divine gift made to the nation by the powerful arms of our fighters. I have to tell our dear nation on the commencement of the New Year that if one is not present in this atmosphere one cannot understand the immensity of the fighters' achievement. Your children, O people, came down from the mountains through difficult terrain.

Before the unbelieving eyes of the commanders of Saddam's Ba'thist army, they were able to conquer a vast area which is of great economic, military, and political importance. This will undoubtedly have an extraordinary impact on the political future of Saddam and of the area. The fields are extensive and productive. The area has big cities. I have seen Halabjah and Khurmal. Truly these should be considered as miracles. Once again our fighters did the impossible, thanks to the strength of their faith and beliefs. Youshould see these mountains in order to understand the extent of our fighters' determination and efforts.

Along with this, there are of course other things. We must address all aware human consciences, as well as the arrogant powers and the advocates of human rights, so that they will come to see what crimes Saddam's regime has perpetrated here. I have seen with my own eyes a couple of villages and areas that were the targets of chemical bombardments. The importance of the issue is that a regime, using the deadliest of weapons, has made its own people the victims of such crimes. I think that even if we had no other evidence apart from what we see here, this would be enough to strengthen our determination to continue this war until this element of mischief is thrown out of the area and out of the political scene. Naturally, we cannot make peace with such an individual. No one should make peace with such an individual, nor should the world. Again at this point I want to appeal

to the world's mass media, to human rights organizations, to the Red Cross, and to the United Nations to come to see the crimes Saddam's regime has perpetrated here.

At any rate, we congratulate all our dear nation on this victory and we congratulate our fighters who are present here. Their morale is high and they are ready to extend operations in all aspects. Saddam's regime too knows that it has many weak points here, and these operations will certainly yield more military results, God willing, to the benefit of our fighters and our nation.

[Correspondent] A large number of the residents of this region and of the liberated areas have sought asylum in the Islamic Republic of Iran. What decisions have you made about these people, and what facilities are to be extended to them by the government?

[Musavi] Of course, I should express my condolences to the good and pious people of Halabjah who welcomed our fighters and also tell them that our nation and all the nations in the area, including Iraq, have suffered many difficulties in order to be freed from Saddam. These people have now sought refuge from us. As for the government, I have issued orders to Mr Rahmani, who was once the governor general of this area—Bakhtaran—and he, with the cooperation of the brothers in the IRGC, the regional forces, and the respectable governors general, will have to follow up the problems of these dear people. He will also be (?in contact) with me. God willing, we will be able to care sufficiently for these pious forces, who are religious forces and the true Muslims of this area. Halabjah is among the clerical-nurturing cities of Iraqi Kurdistan. God willing, our struggles will continue near these dear people until the pro-U.S. regime in this region is uprooted.

[Correspondent] In your tour of this region you also saw the martyrs of Iraq's chemical attacks. Meanwhile, the UN secretary general has called on Iran and Iraq to send representatives to the United Nations for talks on ending the war of the cities. What is your view on this?

[Musavi] We are not at all optimistic now about the Security Council and the United Nations. The United Nations and Security Council do not want to condemn the war of the cities and this crime, so I cannot see how successful it can be in administering justice. There is a spirit of pessimism in our nation, and this spirit is increasing. We are waiting to see what the Security Council will do in the face of Saddam's fresh crimes. This will be a determining factor for us.

[Correspondent] In conclusion, do you have a message for the fighters on the eve of the New Year?

[Musavi] I want to convey a message from our fighters to the nation. Our honor, pride, future, independence, and the future of our faith for coming generations lies in resistance and steadfastness, as well as in continuing great efforts and endeavors. We must struggle continuously against arrogance to stabilize our values. The Koran and Islam tell us this, and God wants this from us. This will lead to our elevation and grandeur. Of course, our nation knows all this. However, we see these values being manifested by our fighters, who boost morale when they come to the fronts and naturally spread this high morale and spirit among the people when they return to the cities. I also have a message from the residents of the cities to the fighters, and that is our residents have displayed great resistance in the psychological atmosphere created by missile attacks and bombings. However, there has never been a single doubt that the most important answer should be given on the fronts; and, fortunately, the fighters have answered these attacks on the fronts.

[Correspondent] Thank you. I pray for your success.

Velayati Writes to ICO Head on Use of Chemicals

NC220644 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] On the eve of the ICO foreign ministers' meeting Foreign Minister Velayati has refused to attend the session because it is being held in Jordan, which is among the mentors of the aggressive Iraqi regime. Velayati has sent a message to ICO Secretary General Pirzada about the Iraqi regime's recent crimes using chemical weapons.

In this message our foreign minister describes Iraq's war crimes, including the extensive chemical bombing of the Iraqi cities of Halabjah and Khurmal, and the martyring and wounding of a large number of Muslim Iraqi Kurds, declaring: Unfortunately, the silence maintained by the ICO and other international forums regarding the continuation and intensification of these crimes has made the criminal Baghdad rulers more impudent. Regrettably, Your Excellency's positive stand against the use of chemical weapons in the past phase did not lead to a change in the ICO's policy.

The message also says: Have the recent savage attacks by the aggressive Iraqi regime—which clearly violate Islamic values and all international laws and commitments and which can be considered war crimes—not further clarified for the ICO and its members the anti-Islamic and inhuman nature of the Iraqi regime? And is the ICO—which has stated that Islam is the focus of its activities—not expected, more than any other forum, to condemn these war crimes, not limiting itself to repetitive and ineffective resolutions and statements?

I hereby inform Your Excellency, and through Your Excellency—in your capacity as ICO secretary general—the members of the conference that the Iraqi regime's extensive use of chemical weapons and the intensification of these crimes against Iranian and Iraqi civilians, contrary to the most basic Islamic and human values, can only succeed in making the wretched record of the

Baghdad rulers and their regional and international mentors more sinister and in making the Muslim Iranian nation more determined to uproot the elements of aggression and corruption. Naturally, the continuation of these war crimes will have a dangerous impact in the region, the responsibility for which will lie with the Iraqi regime and its regional and international mentors.

Velayati Writes to UN on Chemical Weapons Use

LD200632 Tehran IRNA in English 0623 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, in a letter to the U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, disclosed that 5,000 Kurdish civilians had lost their lives and another 4,000 wounded in Iraqi deployment of chemical weapons against Iranian liberated Iraqi towns of Khurmal and Halabjah and their nearby villages on March 18. Iran's Muslim combatants liberated over 1,000 sq. kms of Iraqi territory in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, including several important towns in the course of the victorious "Val-Fajr-10" operations which started last Tuesday. Iraq also suffered over 10,000 casualties and 4,000 of his [as received] men were taken prisoner by Iranians.

In his letter to Perez de Cuellar, Velayati regretted that most of the victims of this fresh Iraqi crime were women and children. Foreign Minister Velayati strongly criticized the U.N. Security Council for its failure to take effective steps in checking continued perpetuation of these crimes by the Baghdad regime, despite confirmations by U.N. probe teams that these deadly weapons had been deployed against Iranians a number of times. "This negligence," Velayati reminded, "has made the Baghdad regime so impudent that this time it has resorted to extensive use of chemical weapons against the oppressed people of Iraq."

Velayati further said that the figures he had mentioned in his letter were based on primary information he had received, adding that precise figures and information regarding the catastrophe would be given to the U.N. chief and other members of the international body through Iran's permanent representative at the U.N. "as just another document of the Iraqi regime's war crimes."

"Is the real nature of the Iraqi regime still unknown to the United Nations and members of the Security Council, despite these savage and inhuman attacks which are in blatant violation of all international regulations, particularly the 1925 Geneva protocol," Velayati asked in his letter.

"Isn't it true that the United Nations Charter and the human rights declaration have been turned to empty slogans because of perpetuation of these crimes on the one hand, and the reticence of the United Nations on the other?"

In conclusion of the letter, Foreign Minister Velayati made it clear that the perpetuation of these unprecedented crimes and the silence of the international conventions would only make the "great nation of Iran" more determined in their resolve to eliminate the cause of aggression and corruption. Without doubt, he said, the Iraqi regime and its backers will be responsible for the consequences of these war crimes.

Mahallati Details Iraqi Chemical Bombings

LD221220 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] During two separate meetings last night, the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations submitted two special messages from our country's foreign minister, Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati, to the UN secretary general and to the president of the Security Council about the recent crimes of the Iraqi regime in dropping chemical bombs. In addition to these two meetings, and in view of the enormity of the dreadful crimes committed by the Iraqi regime in its use of chemical weapons against thousands of inhabitants of the city of Halabjah, the Iranian ambassador called upon all international forums and organizations to begin the task of sending relief as a global measure to save the wounded and victims of this crime.

During a news conference attended by dozens of international correspondents, Mohammad Ja'far Mahallati, referred to the history of the deployment of chemical weapons by the Iraqi regime, and particularly the most recent instance in the liberated city of Halabjah, which has continued since 17 March, and criticized those countries which have blocked any UN resolution against these crimes. He said that such countries are directly responsible for this inhuman crime of the Iraqi regime.

Referring to the different types of bombs and their chemical composition, which are mainly nerve gas, mustard gas, and cyanide, he announced some statistics on the number of dead and wounded. He said: Most of the martyrs and wounded are Iraqis including women, children, and old people. He added: The refusal of the United Nations and the Security Council to condemn the Iraqi regime's use of such weapons, despite the undeniable evidence prepared by the UN fact-finding missions, has encouraged the Baghdad regime to increase the use of these weapons, particularly against the people of Iraq, and has encouraged the blatant violation of the 1925 Geneva Convention.

The Iranian ambassador went on: The action of the Iraqi regime has also seriously undermined international efforts to secure a new convention banning the production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons and has undermined the holding of a special session of the international conference on disarmament. Afterwards, he referred to Iran's repeated reports to the secretary general and to the Security Council, since 17th March, and criticized the United Nations and [word indistinct]

for not making a proper response. He added: Does any one dare now to talk of the Iraqi desire for peace? Can this regime, which subjects its own people to so much cruelty and tramples on international conventions so openly, be committed to bilateral treaties?

In conclusion, the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations called upon this organization, upon the Security Council, and upon the secretary general to condemn the Iraqi regime outright. They should seek every possible means to halt the Iraqi regime's use of chemical weapons, which is still continuing, and to dispatch a fact-finding mission to the region to prepare a report on the use of chemical weapons by the Iraqi regime. He also asked the UN secretary general to submit all evidence on the Iraqi use of chemical weapons, as a document, to the third special conference on disarmament, and put the matter on the agenda of the next UN General Assembly.

800 Victims Transferred to Arak

LD201252 Tehran IRNA in English 1205 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Arak, Central Prov., March 20, IRNA—Some 800 Iraqi Kurds wounded in the Baghdad regime's chemical attacks on the liberated Iraqi town of Halabjah in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, have been transferred to this central Iranian city and welcomed by a group of local people and officials. Many women, children and old people are among the chemically-wounded people. The victims of the Iraqi chemical attacks were hospitalized for further treatment upon their arrival in the city. Meanwhile, a three-month-old infant wounded in the Iraqi chemical bombing of Halabjah town succumbed to his severe injuries last night.

Newsmen Visit Halabjah

LD202047 Tehran IRNA in English 1945 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Bakhtaran, March 20, IRNA—A group of foreign reporters and cameramen on Sunday visited areas liberated by Iran's Muslim combatants in the northeastern Iraqi Province of Al-Sulaymaniyah during the "Val-Fajr-10" operations. On their visit, the foreign mediamen witnessed the depth of the Ba'thist regime's crimes in chemically bombing the liberated areas and massacring thousands of defenceless Iraqi Kurdish civilians. An Iranian co[illegible]ander briefed the reporters and film makers on the goals and achievements of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations launched by Iran's Muslim forces in the strategic region of Darband Khan Dam, Halabjah and Khurmal in northeastern Iraq last Tuesday.

The commander said the victorious Iranian forces after crossing the swift flowing Sirvan, Layleh and Zinkan Rivers and taking over the heights of Balambo, Neshin Dervi and Suren, liberated the Iraqi towns of Halabjah, Dujayrah, Khurmal, Tuwaylah and Biyar without firing even a single bullet at the local civilians. The mediamen also made films and filed reports on the ghastly sight the Pir-Mohammad Street in Halabjah town presented where bodies of a large number of defenseless Kurdish women, children and men killed in the Iraqi chemical attacks were scattered all around.

A personnel of the anti-chemical units of the IRGC told the visitors that Iraq's Ba'thist regime slaughtered a large number of Halabjah residents with toxic, mustard and cyanide gases because they had warmly welcomed Iran's Muslim forces during the liberation of the town. He said that thousands of the defenseless Halabjah residents were martyred and injured in the Iraqi chemical attacks while engaged in their routine work. The chemically-wounded Kurds were immediately transferred to special medical centers inside Iran for further treatment, he added. The foreign mediamen also chatted with some residents of the town inquiring abut the reasons for Iraqi chemical attacks. [passage omitted]

THE LONDON TIMES correspondent in an interview with IRNA said that he was terribly shocked at the sight Halabjah presented with clear evidence of deliberate chemical bombardment and the bodies of a large number of Iraqi Kurds which still litter the streets. The JEUNE AFRIQUE reporter stressed that the deployment of the internationally-banned chemical arms is an inhuman act and deserves severe condemnation no matter who uses them. Meanwhile, the Friday prayers leader of Halabjah Shaykh 'Uthman Khatib urged the foreign mediamen to sincerely reflect to the world the criminal Iraqi chemical bombing of Tuwaylah, Halabjah and Dujaylah. He also said that the Ba'thist regime has razed some 8,000 Kurdish populated villages in northern Iraq since the start of its aggression on the Islamic Republic.

The Baghdad regime which is always on the lookout for a pretext to take revenge on Iraqi Kurds who have refused to bow to the criminal and inhuman policies of this regime, at last realized its wicked plot by chemically bombing the liberated areas, said 'Uthman Khatib. The Halabjah Friday prayers leader also made it clear that the inhuman acts being perpetrated by Baghdad will only serve to intensify Kurdish Muslims' struggles against the Ba'thist regime.

As part of their visit, the reporters and cameramen inspected a POW camp where a large group of Iraqi POW's captured in the course of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations are kept. They also saw a medical center where a group of chemically-wounded Kurds are hospitalized. [passage omitted]

Missile Strikes, Ground Operations Continue

Missile Falls Near Palace

NC201421 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1630 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] According to an IRNA report from Belgrade, some travelers from Baghdad said that a Baghdad refinery and the surrounding Al-Dawrah area were the target

of some surface-to-surface missiles fired by the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to one person, who is a Yugoslavian citizen, Bab al-'Azm and Al-Rashid Avenues, on which the Iraqi Defense Ministry building is located, were also targets of the missiles. According to this report, one missile fell on (Jesr al-Mu'allaq), near Saddam's palace, and damaged the palace compound. According to the SFRY newspaper POLITIKA EKSPRES, one Iranian missile fell on a diplomatic area and another fell on the (Bab al-Sharhi) area.

Missiles Fired at Baghdad Sites

LD200531 Tehran IRNA in English 0527 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA—Two long-range surface-to-surface missiles were unleashed against two important military centers in the Iraqi capital at 00:55 and 00:57 hours local time Sunday (21:25 and 21:27 GMT Saturday). A statement issued by the General Hqs. of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps today, said the missile attacks were in response to "the savage measures of the criminal regime in Baghdad" by which it meant continuing Iraqi attacks against civilian quarters in the Islamic Republic. It stressed that Iran's retaliatory attacks on Iraq's eco-military centers will powerfully continue until they stop "the savage measures of the criminal rulers in Baghdad." The two missiles were fired at Baghdad after the Iraqi regime renewed its missile attacks on Tehran Saturday evening causing some civilian casualties.

Liberian Oil Tanker Attacked

LD201738 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] According to a REUTER report, gunboats attacked a Liberian oil tanker in the southern Persian Gulf today. Shipping sources in the region indicated that during the attack, which took place 16 km off the coast of Sharjah, the oil tanker was set on fire.

Communique No 3,147

LD201858 Tehran IRNA in English 1845 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA—Anti-aircraft fire of the Islamic Republic Air Force shot down an Iraqi MiG-25 over Sumar heights, western fronts at 14:18 hours local time (10:48 GMT) Sunday, said a military communique here today. The 3147th Joint Staff communique said that Iranian long-range artillery pounded economic and military installations of Basra, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Khanaqin, Banmil, Naft Khaneh, Qal'at Dizah and Al-Sulaymaniyah from 10:00 pm (14:30 GMT) Saturday to 06:00 am (02:30 GMT) Sunday inflicting substantial casualtities and losses on the enemy. The Muslim combatants in a lightning ambush on Iraqi positions in Qasr-e Shirin, western sector, wiped out enemy Battalion One of Brigade 423 of Division 21, killing and wounding 800 Ba'thists and capturing 22 others.

Elsewhere on the warfronts, exchange of artillery fire continued along the front lines yesterday with the Muslim combatants holding the upper hand. Iranian patrol units reconoitered and shelled Iraqi positions, military convoys and troop concentration sites Saturday, inflicting heavy casualties on enemy forces. The Gendarmerie forces also pounded Ba'thist positions killing or wounding several enemy forces.

Meanwhile in the southern fronts, Iranian jet fighters carried out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman yesterday in support of the Navy. Iran's naval gunboats intercepted and inspected an oil tanker and a cargo ship in the Strait of Hormuz but allowed them to proceed voyage after making certain they were not carrying cargo for Iraq. An Iraqi warplane attempting to approach an Iranian oil platform in the Persian Gulf was forced to flee by the anti-aircraft fire of the Muslim combatants.

Pakistan

PRC's Ding Xiaonong, Delegation Arrive

BK150409 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 15 Mar 88

The 11-member Chinese delegation led by Ding Xiaonong, the vice minister of the State Commission of the Ministry of Machine-Building Industry, arrived in Karachi yesterday on a week-long visit to Pakistan. The delegation will also visit Lahore and Islamabad.

Discusses Projects With Junejo

BK191646 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 19 Mar 88

[Text] Ding Xiaonong, the vice minister of the Chinese State Commission of the Ministry of Machine-Building Industry, called on Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo in Rawalpindi today. They discussed matters concerning the setting up of the three power generation units at Jam Shoro with the cooperation of the Chinese Government. The prime minister said that the project was being given priority as it was initiated after the talks between himself and the Chinese prime minister during his visit to China. Mohammad Khan Junejo said his government would extend the fullest cooperation to complete this project on time. These three units are expected to begin operation by the middle of 1990.

Power, Irrigation Discussed

BK201647 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] The Chinese delegation led by the vice minister of Chinese State Commission of the Ministry of Machine-Building Industry, Ding Xiaonong, called on President Mohammad Ziaul Haq in Islamabad this afternoon. They discussed matters on increasing cooperation in the field of power between Pakistan and China.

Talks between Pakistan and China on increasing cooperation in the fields of power and irrigation were held in Islamabad today. Federal Minister for Water and Electricity Kazi Abdul Majid Abid led the Pakistani delegation and Ding Xiaonong, the vice minister of the Chinese State Commission of the Ministry of Machine Building Industry, led the Chinese delegation. In his opening speech, the federal minister for water and power said the people of Pakistan view with respect the principled position taken adopted by China in connection with Pakistan's social, cultural and economic difficulties. He welcomed the Chinese assistance, particularly for the Jam Shoro project, and said Pakistan is more interested in technology transfer.

In his speech, the Chinese delegation leader assured China's full cooperation in power and irrigation sectors and in providing agricultural machinery to Pakistan. The problem of flash floods in Pakistan's mountainous areas was also discussed. The two sides agreed to increase cooperation in this field also.

Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew Arrives, Met by Junejo

BK171539 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew and Madam Lee were given a very warm welcome when they arrived in Islamabad this afternoon on a 5-day official visit to Pakistan. Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo received the distinguished guests at the airport. Senate Chairman Ghulam Ishaq Khan, National Assembly Speaker Hamid Nasir Chattha, federal ministers, ministers of state, parliament members, members of the diplomatic corps, councillors, and senior officials were also present on the occasion. [passage omitted]

Junejo Hosts Banquet

BK180432 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Formal talks between the prime ministers of Pakistan and Singapore are being held in Rawalpindi today. Radio Pakistan's representative says it is expected that international and regional issues and bilateral relations will be considered at the talks.

Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo hosted a banquet in honor of the Singaporean prime minister last night. Speaking on the occasion, Mohammad Khan Junejo said Pakistan is making continuous and sincere efforts to peacefully resolve the Afghanistan issue through talks based on the right of self-determination of the Afghan people. Such a resolution to the Afghanistan issue will quickly bring about the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, the restoration of the independent and nonaligned status of Afghanistan, and will enable the 3 million Afghan refugees staying in Pakistan to return to their nation with dignity and honor.

The prime minister expressed the hope that as a result of the current round of Geneva talks, the Afghanistan issue will be resolved peacefully and the global tension created by this crisis will be eased. Mohammad Khan Junejo thanked Singapore for its continuous and full support for Pakistan's stand on Afghanistan.

Reiterating Pakistan's stand on Cambodia, the prime minister said Pakistan fully supports the positive proposals made by Singapore and the other ASEAN countries for the total withdrawal of foreign forces from Cambodia. The prime minister said we must create an atmosphere of understanding and friendship so that every country will be able to confidently work for the welfare of its people. He expressed the hope the visit of the prime minister of Singapore will be a milestone toward promoting the existing relations between the two countries.

In his speech, the Singaporean prime minister lauded Pakistan's vital role for a peaceful solution to the Afghanistan conflict and said as a result of Pakistan's position at the United Nations and the total support of the UN resolutions on Afghanistan, the government set up [in Kabul] with foreign military intervention was unable to gain legal status. He expressed the hope that the progress made toward resolving the Afghanistan conflict will have a positive effect on efforts to resolve the Cambodian issue.

The Singaporean prime minister lauded Pakistan's role in promoting cooperation among the member nations of the SAARC and said ASEAN and SAARC can play a vital role in promoting peace, harmony, and understanding in their respective areas. Mr Lee Kuan Yew said the relations between Pakistan and Singapore have always been cordial and friendly and both countries have closely cooperated with each other on the international level. He thanked Pakistan for its support on the Cambodian issue.

Regarding the economic sector, he said Singapore is ready to buy more goods from Pakistan. The businessmen of both the countries should be encouraged to review the possibilities of selling their goods in each other's markets.

Holds Formal Talks With Junejo

BK181218 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 18 Mar 88

[Text] Formal talks between Pakistan and Singapore were held in Rawalpindi today. The 2-hour talks, held in most cordial and friendly atmosphere, were led by the

prime minister, Mr Mohammad Khan Junejo, on the Pakistan side, while the prime minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, led his country's delegation.

Later, an official spokesman told newsmen that two leaders exchanged views extensively on matters of global and regional situation. Attention was centered on Afghanistan and Cambodian problems, and both sides briefed each other about their perceptions on these issues. Pakistan's relations with its neighbors in South Asia, especially with India, also came up under discussion.

On bilateral matters, it was noted that both sides enjoyed long, trouble-free relations, but it was emphasized that further efforts should be made to improve these ties. Replying to a question, the spokesman said discussions were held on the possibility of increasing exports, especially those of agro-based products, from Pakistan to Singapore.

Calls on President Ziaul Haq

BK200350 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 20 Mar 88

[Text] Singaporean Prime Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew called on President Mohammad Ziaul Haq in Rawalpindi last evening. Prime Minister Mr Mohammad Khan Junejo was also present on the occasion. They exchanged views on matters of regional and international concern. The Singaporean prime minister lauded Pakistan's principled and courageous stand on Afghanistan which has been proved correct in wake of the recent developments. Both leaders expressed happiness at the excellent relations existing between Pakistan and Singapore and emphasized identification of more sectors of mutual cooperation to further enhance these bilateral ties.

President Mohammad Ziaul Haq awarded Nishan-i Qaide Azam [Pakistani civil award] to the Singaporean prime minister at a simple ceremony at the Presidency in Rawalpindi last evening. The award was given to Mr Lee Kuan Yew in recognition of his meritorious service for the welfare and progress of the people of Singapore in particular and the people of ASEAN in general, besides for his full support for Pakistan on matters of utmost importance. Speaking on the occasion, the Singaporean prime minister thanked the president for the award and commended Pakistan's progress in political and economic fields.

Speaking at a dinner hosted in honor of the Singaporean prime minister in Rawalpindi last night, President Mohammad Ziaul Haq praised Singapore's political and economic system and said it should be emulated by developing countries. The president also commended Singapore's judicial and social institutions and added that all these things are due to the wise leadership of Mr Lee Kuan Yew. In reply, Mr Lee Kuan Yew expressed confidence that his visit would further strengthen close and warm relations between their people. Prime Minister Mr Mohammad Khan Junejo and others also attended the dinner.

Leaves for Home 21 Mar

BK220240 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 22 Mar 88

[Text] Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew was given a very warm send-off when he left Karachi for home last night after a 5-day visit to Pakistan. He was seen off at the airport by Sind Governor Ashraf Tabani, Chief Minister Syed Ghous Ali Shah, and others.